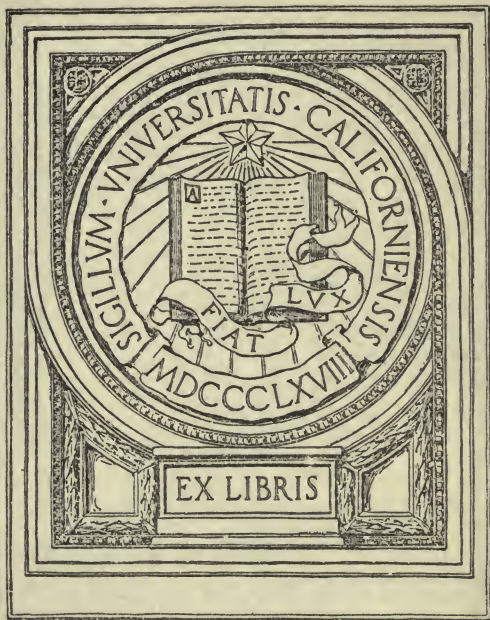


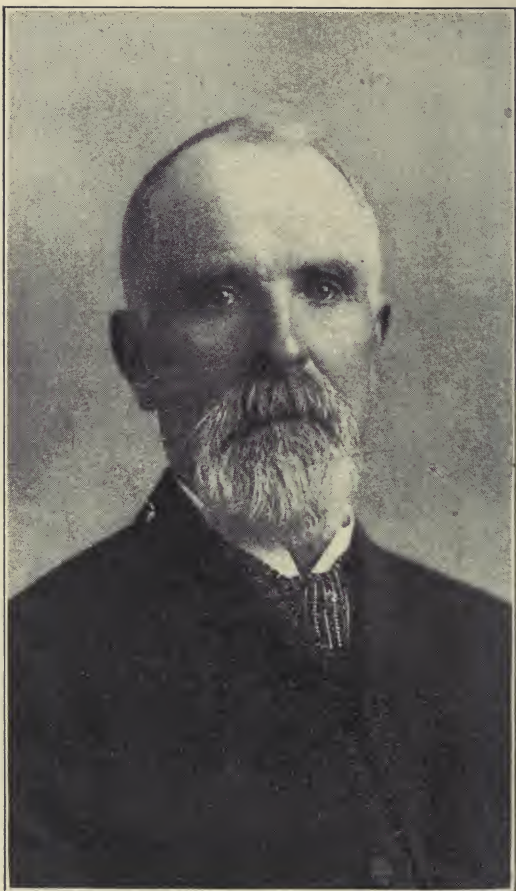


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JOHN RIGGS MURDOCK.

A Biographical Sketch
OF
John Riggs Murdock



By
J. M. TANNER

THE DESERET NEWS
Salt Lake City, Utah
1909

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Foreword.

The early history of the Church is made up largely of the strenuous and often unexampled efforts of the men and women whose heroic toils, sufferings, patience, and faith gave to the new movement a greatness and glory that increase as time goes on. Individual experiences, therefore, enriched that early history and give us a deeper insight into the real characters of the men and women whose devotion and constancy are as inspiring as they are interesting.

Among those who dedicated to the Church and its cause their best efforts, efforts of intense patriotism, and whose endurance was the crowning glory of those times, the name of John R. Murdock plays an important part. Had others not drawn out from him the story of his life, its inspiration and its example would have been lost to the world. When the manuscript prepared from facts given by him was read for his approval his only remark was: "They have made quite a man of me."

He made himself, but the value of his life to others he had perhaps never realized. When asked how many books he wanted, his reply was an edition just enough for his family.

Certain that the book would find interest and value beyond the confines of his home and relations, a larger edition is published. The story of his life is one which all who would emulate his integrity and his example may desire to read.

THE AUTHOR.

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John Riggs Murdock

CHAPTER I

INFANCY ON THE FRONTIERS

John Riggs Murdock was born on the 13th of September, 1826. The date of his birth places his advent into the world on the threshold of a new dispensation. It was not only the dawn of a new era in the expansion of his native country, but it was at the beginning of a new era in the development of science, art, and invention. A new earth and a new heaven were just ushering in upon the human family. That year in the world's history was the beginning of a new life and he was born, therefore, into the coming opportunities that were awaiting men of pronounced character and unyielding faith. The opportunities of his environments were perhaps not so important in his favor as the circumstances of his birth.

His father, John Murdock, was one of those pioneers of New England descent who had the courage and the hope to brave the undeveloped regions of the West. He had, therefore, transmitted to his son those peculiar qualities of life which make of men sturdy and courageous pioneers. The mother, whose maiden name was Julia Clapp, was a daughter of Judge Horace Clapp of Mentor, Ohio, who, in turn, was a son of Abner Clapp, a captain in the colonial army during the Revolutionary War. Abner was himself a direct descendant of Captain Roger Clapp, who came over from England in 1630 in the ship *Mary and John*, and was captain of Fort Independence in Boston Harbor for twenty-one years. Such parentage gave to the boy a rich inheritance that marked his life covering a long period of service both in the church and state.

Another circumstance which seemed efficacious in transmitting to the son the courage and independence of religious convictions is found in the fact that the father and mother were members of the Campbellite Church. These followers of Alexander Campbell, who was a bold and adroit leader, had been taught

to rest their convictions upon the reformation of those times—a reformation which brought men back to a plain and literal interpretation of Holy Writ. Whatever, therefore, might befall the young boy in after life, however meagre the chances of a public school education, he was certainly equipped by the circumstances of his birth and a rich inheritance to take a front place in the ranks and in the deliberations of his fellow men.

In the midst of this religious awakening in northeastern Ohio, a religious movement of greater import and of divine purpose was taking place in western New York, where the Prophet Joseph Smith was the recipient of heavenly revelations announcing the advent of a new dispensation in the world's history. There were in that region of the country, between Canandaigua and Colesville, about seventy members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To them had been committed the Book of Mormon and with it the duty of making the new message known to the inhabitants of the earth. The missionary spirit was upon them, and in the year 1830 a revelation was given requiring Oliver Cow-

dery, Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, and Peter Whitmer, Jr. to visit the Lamanites, or Indians of the West, and make known to them the story of their forefathers. As these men set out on their westward journey, they soon reached the district of country about Kirtland. Here Parley P. Pratt met his old friend and teacher, Sidney Rigdon, of the Reformed Baptists Society.

The testimony of these elders and the message of the Book of Mormon awakened intense feelings and interest among the Campbellites, who were in a frame of mind and a condition of spirit to receive the new message. Speaking of those times Parley P. Pratt, in his autobiography, says: "The interest and excitement now became general in Kirtland and in all the region round about. The people thronged day and night, in so much that we had no time for rest or retirement."

"In two or three weeks from our arrival in the neighborhood with the news, we had baptized one hundred and twenty souls and this number soon increased to one thousand. The disciples were filled with joy and gladness; while rage and lying were abundantly mani-

fested by gainsayers; faith was strong, joy was great, and persecution heavy. We proceeded to ordain Sidney Rigdon, Isaac Morley, John Murdock, Lyman Wight to the ministry; and, leaving them to take care of the Church and minister the gospel, we took leave of the Saints and continued our journey."

The boy John Riggs at this time was only four years of age. From his earliest recollection he was brought up amid scenes of conflict, and in the society of courageous and faithful men. Such a training as befell him, therefore, in his youth was, really, one of rare opportunity. As the development of a manly character is, after all, one of the first aims of education, the boy's schooling in a new and wonderful life was perhaps after all of greater value and consequence to him in his pioneer work than the text-book of a schoolroom could ever have given.

Sidney Rigdon was anxious to meet the Prophet, and therefore at his earliest opportunity set out for Fayette, New York, where he and Joseph Smith first became associated in the early experiences of the Church. Nor was it a matter of small moment to the boy

and his environments that his father was in those early days numbered with such men as Rigdon, Morley, Wight, and Partridge. "Tell me," says the old adage, "what a man's associations are, and I will tell you what he is."

Soon after this a revelation was given requiring the Saints in New York to gather in Ohio. This was the first revelation on gathering in this dispensation. This divine requirement brought the Saints in the spring of 1831 to Kirtland, where the Saints were required to receive the new brethren from the East and to divide their lands with them, "until the Lord should command them to gather in the land of their inheritance." This new move established the Church in that region of Ohio, where John Murdock and his son lived.

The elder Murdock was in those days also closely associated with Parley P. Pratt. In their missionary labors there were peculiar spiritual manifestations which troubled these elders, and in the absence of their Prophet they felt somewhat dismayed and in need of his guidance. It was a remarkable privilege given to man to take part with the Prophet and with the elders whom God had raised

up as companions for him. Such a privilege was accorded to John Murdock. In his autobiography Parley P. Pratt, speaking of those times, says: "Feeling our weakness and inexperience, and lest we should err in judgment concerning this spiritual phenomenon, myself, John Murdock, and several other elders went to Joseph Smith and asked him to inquire of the Lord concerning these spirits or manifestations. Here, in Kirtland, in the Prophet's translating room, Joseph Smith dictated, in their presence a revelation. Elder Pratt, describing the revelation, says: "Each sentence was uttered slowly and very distinctly, and with a pause between each sufficiently long for it to be recorded by an ordinary writer in long hand. This was the manner in which all his revelations were dictated and written. There was never any hesitation, reviewing, or reading back in order to keep the run of the subject."

The atmosphere of such divine manifestation and such revelations was an atmosphere in which the father lived and whose influence must have been his guiding star. Having a father thus favored, there must have been awak-

ened in the heart of the boy a confidence that could not easily be shaken ; and those who know John Riggs Murdock will be quick to ascribe that unyielding faith and devotion in his life in some degree at least to the atmosphere from which he received his earliest religious convictions.

If there were strong influences and great men carrying John Murdock along in the course of his new-born faith, there were also counteracting influences which compelled him to take an attitude of firmness and maintain the God-given testimony that meant to him a new life and a great sacrifice. His wife, Julia Clapp, was related to Alexander Campbell by marriage, her sister having married a brother of this able religious leader. Nor was opposition the only trial that beset him in those days. To him and his wife were born five children, Orrice Clapp, John Riggs, and Phœbe Clapp, besides the historical twin babies, Julia and Joseph. Upon the birth of the last-named two, the mother died, leaving the care of her five children to neighbors and friends. This happened in the month of April, 1831, before John Riggs Murdock had reached his fifth

year. Speaking of those times in later years the subject of this sketch said: "Fresh in my memory is the death of my dear mother, which occurred in Warrensville township, which joins Orange township. There was a dreadfully sad scene among her poor children following her death. It was simply heart-rending to hear little sister Phœbe, only two years old, cry out for her mother as if her little heart would break. We were staying at a neighbor's when father came and told us the sad news. He wept most bitterly; for he realized all the sorrow of the situation."

The same day that Julia Murdock gave birth to her twin children, a similar occurrence took place in the family of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Nine days later the Prophet's wife, Emma, to assuage her grief over the loss of her twin children, and to respond to a heart-felt sympathy for the unfortunate little ones in the Murdock family, took these twins, Joseph and Julia. About the time the little ones were eleven months old, the Prophet moved from Kirtland to a nearby town called Hiram, where he lived in the family of Father Johnson.

In consequence of the rapid growth of the Mormon people in that section of the country, and the large number of converts made from the Campbellite Church, persecution grew intense. Apostates sought justification in the humiliation of those whose teachings and authority they later came to despise. An account of the death of the twin Joseph and the circumstances leading to it is given by the Prophet Joseph in his biography of March 24, 1832: "The twins before mentioned, which had been sick of the measles for some time, caused us to be broken of our rest in taking care of them, especially my wife. In the evening I told her she had better retire with one of the children, and I would watch with the sicker child. In the night she told me I had better lie down on the trundle bed, and I did so, and was soon after awakened by her screaming, 'murder!' when I found myself going out of the door in the hands of about a dozen men, some of whose hands were in my hair, and some had hold of my shirt, drawers, and limbs. * * * During the mobbing one of the twins, Joseph, contracted a se-

were cold and continued to grow worse until Friday, and then died." This was March 22, 1832. In one day more the children would have been eleven months old. Julia, the other twin, continued to live in the Prophet's family until she married.

About this time there began in pursuance of revelation a move of the Saints from Kirtland and neighborhood to the land of Zion in Missouri. For five years after the death of the mother of John Riggs Murdock, his father devoted himself to the work of the ministry, and the children were placed in the care of friends. When this boy was six years of age, he, with his brother Orrice and sister Phœbe, were placed in the keeping of Caleb Baldwin, who left Ohio in 1832 to settle with the Saints in Independence, Missouri.

They were little children to undertake such a journey and under such circumstances of privation and hardship. The second boy, the subject of this sketch, was then already old enough to sense in some measure the change in his surroundings and the new life he was to take on thereafter. It cannot be said, how-

ever, that he lacked love and friendship and the tender care which springs from them.

The Saints in those days were subject to persecution. Their sympathies, therefore, were awakened by every misfortune and suffering that came to their fellow men, and especially those of their own faith; besides, the father of these Murdock children was devoting himself to the ministry. His devotion, therefore, to the cause of God and the sacrifice which it entails in separating him from his little ones, would naturally beget a heartfelt interest in their behalf. Caleb Baldwin, the man to whose tender mercies they had been entrusted, was himself in years to come to undergo tribulations. Indeed, he must have felt during those days of travel between Kirtland and Independence a solicitous welfare for the little charges entrusted to his keeping.

When the children reached their destination in Missouri, they were separated—a circumstance indeed trying to a childish love for little brothers and sisters. Little Phœbe, a helpless child at that time, was given over to the care of Sidney Gilbert and wife. Having no

children of their own, and loving little ones, they bestowed an abundance of love and care on little Phœbe. She lived, however, to be only six years old, having died of the cholera at the same time Sidney Gilbert and several members of Zion's Camp fell victims of that dread disease. The boy, John Riggs, a little older than his departed sister, carried the memories of a childish love and devotion and was wont in after years to declare: "Truly, she was a lovely child!" The oldest boy, Orrice, passed on to the keeping of different ones. As those days were full of trouble, and men's circumstances changed so often and so radically they could not continue their guardianship over him.

The subject of this sketch came under the supervision of the Presiding Bishop of the Church in those days, Edward Partridge, who gave him over to Morris C. Phelps, who had at that time no little ones. Thus began the life of John Riggs Murdock on the outposts of civilization. It was a life in Jackson County, where he was old enough to witness the savage persecutions of his benefactors and of his people. The impressions made during that

time upon a mind so young can scarcely be comprehended by those whose peaceful surroundings are so happyfying, and whose comforts relieve the childish mind of all fear and forebodings.

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD IN MISSOURI

The childhood of John Riggs Murdock in Missouri, during those awful days of bitter persecution, must have been one of constant and intense anxiety. He was too young then—for he was only six years old when he reached Independence, Jackson county—to feel the supporting influence which comes to those who understand in some measure God's purpose in persecution, and who have the experience of faith and an understanding sufficient to comprehend a situation even though it be full of distress. This boy would naturally cling with fear and anxiety to those in whom he trusted. To him the situation was full of bewilderment, he could not comprehend the arguments that were carried on between the enemies and the Saints, and in their contentions he could only know that there was for some reason a murderous intent in the hearts of those who were persecuting his people and his guardians.

The western Missourians of those days were Southerners. The blighting influence of slavery was an object lesson to the Saints, who, by their industry in reclaiming the prairie lands, stood out in striking contrast with their Southern neighbors. Those were days when slave-holders had staked their all on the triumph and supremacy of their cherished institution of negro servitude. Politics, therefore, in those frontier territories took on a deadly aspect that perhaps has never had an equal in the history of our country. The political power of the Mormons was to the enemy a subject of grave fears, and the struggle to thwart that coming power, as they viewed it, became to them a matter of life and death. The Mormons must leave Jackson county.

The Phelps family, in which the boy lived, by reason of its prominence, became one of the shining marks against whom the murderous assaults of those Mormon haters were directed. There were constant gatherings of the mobs to intimidate the Saints and to enforce their removal from Jackson county. Sometimes these mobs and bodies of the Saints came into open conflict, but the Saints were in the

minority, and their opposition only served as an excuse to perpetrate upon them the inhuman outrages that characterized their driving from the confines of Jackson county across the Missouri River north into Clay county.

A picture of those days, the fifth and sixth of November, 1832, scenes to which John Riggs Murdock was in a large measure an eye-witness, has been painted, in the *Times and Seasons*, and in the biography of the Prophet Joseph. Those scenes are here given at some length because, though the history of different communities, they are nevertheless stirring incidents that came within the childhood experience of John Riggs Murdock:

"All through this day and the day following (November 6th) women and children were fleeing in every direction from the presence of the merciless mob. One company of one hundred and ninety—all women and children, except three decrepit men—were driven thirty miles across a burnt prairie, the ground thinly crusted with sleet, their trail being easily followed by the blood which flowed from their lacerated feet.

"Other parties during the two days men-

tioned flocked to the Missouri River, and crossed at the ferries into Clay county. One of the companies of the distressed women and children were kindly lodged by a Mr. Bennett for the night in his house."

If you would see that boy on the banks of the Missouri River on the 7th day of November, 1833, read the scene as portrayed by the prophet:

"The shore began to be lined on both sides of the ferry with men, women and children, goods, wagons, boxes, chests, provisions, etc., while the ferrymen were busily employed in crossing them over; and when night again closed upon the Saints the wilderness had much the appearance of a camp meeting. Hundreds of people were seen in every direction; some in tents and some in the open air, around their fires, while the rain descended in torrents. Husbands were inquiring for their wives; and women for their husbands; parents for children; and children for parents. Some had the good fortune to escape with their family, household goods and some provisions; while others knew not of the fate of their loved ones and had lost all their goods. The scene was in-

describable, and would have melted the hearts of any people upon the earth, except the blind oppressor, and prejudiced and ignorant bigot. Next day the company increased, and they were chiefly engaged in felling small cotton-wood trees and erecting them into temporary cabins, so that when night came on they had the appearance of a village of wigwams, and the night being clear, the occupants began to enjoy some degree of comfort. "

The Evening and Morning Star contains the following description of a meteoric phenomenon which gave encouragement to the distressed Saints, and for the moment created some dismay among their enemies :

"On the night of the 13th of November, while large bodies of the Saints were still in Camp on the Missouri bottoms, exiled from their homes for the gospel's sake, one of the most wonderful meteoric showers occurred that was ever witnessed. The whole heavens and the earth were made brilliant by the streams of light which marked the course of the falling aerolites. The whole upper deep was one vast display of heaven's fireworks. The long trains of light left in the heavens by

the meteors would twist into the most fantastic shapes, like writhing serpents. Its grandeur was far beyond the power of words to describe.

"It is needless to say, then, that this sign in the heavens encouraged the distressed Saints; that it revived their hopes; that it calmed their fears; that the coming of their deliverer was drawing nigh. Nor need I say that it awed the mob, and made a pause in their cruel proceedings for a season. But that pause was brief; for on the twenty-third of November the mob held a meeting, and appointed a committee to warn any of the Saints who might possibly be found within the borders of the county, to leave."

Of this remarkable manifestation, John R. Murdock says: "The stars fell in countless numbers; and were as vivid and real to my eye as are the immense hail stones or snow flakes that may fall in an ordinary storm."

The boy found himself north of the Missouri River, in Clay county, when only seven years of age, dependent upon foster parents who in turn were largely dependent upon the hospitality of those whose pity had been reached by the inhuman treatment which had over-

taken the Saints in Jackson county. When it is remembered that at this time the Saints were poor; that what little they had in Jackson county had been destroyed, we can well imagine the touching poverty that existed in their midst. The poverty was so great that even though the pride of the boy was not touched by its existence, he must have felt it keenly in the want of the ordinary necessities of life, as food would be scant and his raiment poor. At his age of life, too, he would be deeply sensitive to his unfavorable and uncertain surroundings.

Here, too, in the life of John R. Murdock, from the period of seven to nine years of age, was indelibly impressed upon his soul that intense and abiding faith in the rightfulness of the Saints to the land of their inheritance, of Jackson county, which to him was the land of promise—the chosen place of the Lord. The history of those times recounts the tenacity with which the Saints held to the hope of their Zion. It was not merely the land they had been compelled to leave, measured in dollars and cents; it was not the houses burned from over their heads; it was not the loss of horses

and cattle, nor the destruction of their movables upon which they had centered their affection; it was upon a particular spot of earth—the Zion of their God—the land of promise—the glory of days to come. How could they abandon it! It was a part of their faith, and their eyes turned back to Jackson county with a yearning of a steadfast purpose and an unyielding faith.

While the Saints generally had their hearts set upon Jackson county, this boy was receiving those early impressions of life which are written both on and in the human soul. It is not, therefore, to be wondered that all his life long there was a sacred corner in the heart of John Riggs Murdock, where he treasured up a loving and abiding faith in the thought of Jackson County. It was a part of his life. He spoke about it from the pulpit, he referred to it in private conversation, but what he said must have been small in comparison with his thoughts and feelings about the chosen Zion of the Lord.

The people then had not abandoned their hope of a favorable opportunity to return to this chosen spot. That hope has never been

abandoned by the Latter-day Saints, even those born at times long subsequent. If in the children of the Covenant who had never seen Jackson county there is inborn hope for the redemption of that promised spot of earth, what must be the feelings of a man toward it who, as the subject of this sketch, from his earliest recollections kept tenaciously to the promise which had been given him respecting the Zion of his God. Perhaps in the decline of life, when he stands on the shores of the great hereafter, no thought has been more cherished by him than that of the ultimate return of the Saints to Jackson county.

He felt as others of his time felt, that when he left Clay county it would be to drop back again across the Missouri River to receive the land there given the Saints as an inheritance.

From Clay county he went with the Saints to Caldwell. For him in this new county there began a new training. It was the birth of uncommon responsibilities which were to develop a character for manhood, persistency, and industry that gave him much of the prominence and prestige he enjoyed in after life among his fellow men.

During the stay of John R. Murdock in Clay county, he naturally shared the experiences of his fellow outcasts. The hardships which such a condition works upon a boy are usually greater than those encountered by persons of mature years, who have the physical powers to withstand the cold, want of food and other trials. After he had been baptized by his father in Clay county, on the 14th day of September, 1834, the day after he was eight years of age, he came properly under the designation of a Mormon. He was then old enough to sense, in some measure, the situation, and feel the humiliation to which he and his older brethren had been subjected. In his life, the years of 1835-36-37 and 38, when he was nine, ten, eleven and twelve years old, experiences came to him which had much to do with the convictions on the important question of Mormonism throughout all his subsequent life. Those were, indeed, rare experiences for a boy who was of his age, an age in which the memory plays so important a part and impressions are so lasting.

The history of those years, from the standpoint of his youth, are worth here a brief re-

capitulation. He had been an eye-witness of that awful hatred known only in religious persecution. It was a hatred both vile and murderous. As he looked into the faces of the men who drove him and his foster parents from Jackson county, he must have felt something of the terror that only such a murderous hatred can forget. When he settled in Clay county he felt the sympathy which the people, who received the refugees bestowed in consequence of the pity which they felt for those unfortunate exiles. There would naturally be awakened within the boy a deep sense of gratitude for the slightest favor bestowed, but that gratitude was not left long undisturbed; for the shelter which he received in Clay county was only temporary, and he with his people, was first coldly invited to leave the county and later were threatened if they tarried long. It is not easy to describe what a boy's conception of a free government was under such circumstances. Then he must have gradually awakened to the fact that no government is more just than the people who maintain it. However, the people moved to Caldwell county, where the broad prairie was considered in those

days unfavorable for the purposes of settlement. The county was comparatively free from inhabitants and it looked as though the Mormons might dwell there in peace with themselves. He had now arrived at that age of life, although still young, where his services could be extensively utilized. At eleven years of age he says that he plowed and cultivated ten acres of land. He also remembers, among the early experiences of his boyhood, the fact that he drove a team at the time the excavation was made for the foundation of the Temple in the town of Far West.

There were busy and stirring scenes in Far West during the years of 1836, 1837 and 1838. It was the County Seat, the center of the religious and political organizations of the people. He saw his father there at the conference of 1837 chosen the senior member of the high council, which was organized for that stake of Zion. With that body of men might be seen a number of strong characters, whose association with his father not only had an impression upon the boy, but awakened within him feelings of admiration by reason of what he saw and heard. He also learned at that time

the importance which the Church had placed upon the Word of Wisdom, for by unanimous vote the people agreed that they would not support any store or shop which sold intoxicating liquors, tea, coffee, or tobacco. The leaders of the Church were anxious to secure the favor of the Lord by the observance of his requirements. They were anxious to fortify the brethren against the practices which lead to indulgence and disunion.

The Church, however, was not to escape temptation; and if its members avoided one snare, others were laid to trap their unwary feet. There were other temptations besides self-indulgence. Best of opportunities were given to gratify selfishness in those who felt the inner temptation.

Into Caldwell and two or three of the other adjoining counties, the Saints were coming from Canada and Kirtland, and it was not long before there were some twelve thousand people among the Saints in Missouri. This influx of population naturally created a rise in land values. The old settlers could not resist the temptation to speculate at the expense of the new-comers. Along with this selfish-

ness there developed among them feelings of pride which resulted in division and later in apostasy.

Here the boy must have listened to the contentions that were the outgrowth of strife and rivalry. He saw the witnesses to the Book of Mormon fall by the wayside. He saw apostles undertake to bring trouble and calamity upon the Prophet. Those men who were opposing the counsels of the Prophet and violating his instructions, no doubt, had their "strong arguments." Fortunately for him his father and his foster parents, those responsible for his welfare, did not falter. The foster father of his sister, Sidney Gilbert, had declared to the Prophet in the strength of his manhood that he would rather die than go on a mission. Death speedily overtook the man in the days of the cholera plague. Those were days that laid the foundation of that faith in John Riggs Murdock which served in future life to guard him against the sophistries of men and the dangers of selfish ambition. He had learned in his youth, perhaps the most important lesson in Mormonism; namely, that there is no safety for men who have not a spiritual guidance

stronger and surer than the reasons and arguments of their fellows. It was in those days, too, that John R. Murdock learned that might was not right. The brute force which was the only superior power that the Missourians could claim, stood out in striking contrast to the intelligence, industry, virtue, and refinement of the Latter-day Saints. He also saw the excuses which querulous men made use of as a justification for their violence and injustice, and he therefore throughout the remainder of his life avoided those who were given to contention and strife.

The Prophet Joseph had been in Far West in 1837 and had given the people an organization and directed the work of their colonization. He then returned to Kirtland, to look after the Saints there. But the Prophet could not travel fast enough between these distant places to subdue the contentions and enmity which the evil one created. In the spring of 1838 Joseph felt that his presence was needed more with the Saints on the frontier, that he must quit Kirtland if his life were to be preserved. He was soon followed by the majority of the Saints in Ohio. Gathering was going on

rapidly in Missouri. On the 4th of July, 1838, he witnessed the laying of the corner-stone in the excavation which had been prepared the year before in Far West. The people of Missouri clearly foresaw that Caldwell county would not satisfy the requirements of the Latter-day Saints. Their immigration was naturally a source of some alarm. They entertained a fear of the Mormon people, whose increasing numbers they considered a menace to their power. They were slave holders, and were anxious that the slave power should predominate in every new state of the West. The chasm between the slaveholders of the South and the people of the North was growing wider and deeper. That "peculiar institution," if it prevailed, must do so by political supremacy. The Mormons did not contend against slavery, but that made no difference, for in biblical language the Missourians declared that, "those who are not for us are against us."

It is sometimes said that politics has been the chief cause of trouble to the Mormon people from the earliest period of their history. No doubt politics had much to do with driving the Saints from Missouri, but Mormons like

to vote. They want to exercise their franchise as freely as other people do, and sometimes they like to vote for their friends. The bringing of 12,000 people into the state of Missouri within a short time would naturally create some apprehension, and no doubt there appeared upon the horizon of the Missourians of those days the bug-a-boo of Missouri under Mormon dominion. In Daviess county, in the year 1838, a few Mormons undertook to exercise their franchise, and they had no doubt been persuaded by their Gentile brethren, that it was not only their privilege but their right to do so, and it may be true that they had a kind of balance of power that the mobocrats feared and determined should not be exercised. A row resulted and false rumors spread throughout the state in the wildest manner about the Mormons.

Under ordinary circumstances such an excitement and such an appeal to arms could not have been brought about. It is perhaps not wholly correct to say that the ministers did it. It was in part a question of animosity on the part of slaveholders towards those of New England descent, whom the slaveholders of

those days so cordially hated. It was in any event the wrath of the evil one let loose, but beyond all we now see the finger of God pointing to other lands, to another destiny, to a greater people located in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. No explanation of those awful persecutions, and of the hatred of those days is sufficient to make clear Mormon history in Missouri, which does not recognize the hand of God in the destiny of a peculiar people whose future was to serve his almighty purposes.

Troubles came thick and fast. At first the out-posts were attacked. The Saints at De-witt were surrounded and compelled to gather at Far West. Later came the massacre at Haun's mill; and in the midst of it all Governor Boggs' awful decree of extermination. Under such circumstances the people could not have failed to see that the coming storm was irresistible, and that they must leave the state. It was no longer a question of what to do, but how to do it. They were in dire distress. The enemy was giving them no quarter. There might have been seen in those days men and

women fleeing in all directions toward Far West.

While all these things were going on John R. Murdock lived with the Phelps family about two and one-half miles from the town. While he was there, Col. Hinkle, in charge of the militia, betrayed the Prophet Joseph into the hands of the mob. There the boy heard the awful howls, wild demonstrations of delight over the treachery which had brought the Prophet and other leaders of the Church under its control. He felt the suspense that was common to his people when the word reached his ears that these leaders had been court-martialed and sentenced to death. If older ones could see no escape for those they loved from what seemed certain death, what must have been the thoughts and feelings of this boy! If the situation taxed their faith, what must have been his trust in the providences of God! The release from a situation so threatening, from death apparently so certain, must have taught him throughout all his subsequent years, that faith, after all, is the highest and strongest assurance that man can have under such trying ordeals of life.

Perhaps this boy did not fully sense the dangers with which he was surrounded and the future hardships which then immediately awaited him. His foster father, Morris Phelps, was taken prisoner and subjected to the great indignities that befell the Prophet, Parley P. Pratt and others. At this period of life, when he was only twelve years old, some of the responsibility of the family fell upon him. He was brought into contact with the officers of the militia, who used the boy in securing horses and to make such trades as the officers thought advantageous to them.

He was thus brought into the whirl of excitement and danger which then prevailed. At Far West he was a witness to many evil acts of an infuriated, low-minded mob.

When the people in Far West gathered on the public square to listen to the words of General Clark and learn from him their doom, John R. Murdock again felt those cruel uncertainties of days to come more keenly than he felt his situation when he crossed the river some years before from Jackson into Clay county. Did he realize the meaning of those words which fell from the lips of General

Clark? Did he know their awful import? What feelings of misgiving they must have awakened within his breast when those awful words were made clear to his understanding! General Clark said: "As for your leaders, do not think, do not imagine for a moment, do not let it enter your minds that they will be delivered, or that you will ever see their faces again; for their fate is fixed, their die is cast, their doom is sealed. I would advise you to scatter abroad and never again organize with bishops, presidents, etc., lest you excite the jealousy of the people and subject yourselves to the same calamities that have now come upon you."

The Saints now well understood that they could not remain another season in Missouri. It was not so much a question of what they should do, as what they could do. They must leave. The people of Illinois along the Mississippi river offered them a place of refuge. The people of Illinois were Northerners and comprehended the misfortunes of the Mormons who had fallen into the hands of the irate Southerners of Missouri. Then the awful sufferings of the Saints called for action and

they began immediate preparations during the winter of 1838 and 1839 to cross eastern Missouri to the state of Illinois.

In those days travel was not only slow but difficult. Extensive preparations had to be made for even short journeys. The people were using every endeavor to save all that they could from the loot of the mob. Their horses and cattle had been driven away. Besides the theft to which they were subjected, there was malicious deviltry in much that the mob did. It destroyed property in the most wanton manner. Sometimes mobocrats would shoot down a cow while some girl was milking it. Then they brought to their aid all sorts of cunning devices to excuse their theft and robbery, when they preferred to conceal notoriously open and wicked conduct. At the point of their guns they compelled the Mormons to sign away their property for the alleged purpose of defraying the expenses of the war.

The young Murdock boy was an eye-witness of those trying days. The hardships of the people were his hardships. Being naturally sensitive, he felt keenly the outrages which he constantly saw perpetrated upon his people.

His home had been broken up by the capture of its head. Fortunately, however, he enjoyed in some measure the protecting care of his foster mother, Laura Phelps, who was the daughter of Timothy B. Clark, a well-to-do man in those days. This brought him into association with such men as William O. Clark, a great preacher in the early history of the Church. He was also associated with Ezra T. Clark, another member of that family. The Clarks had considerable property for those days. Much of it consisted of cattle and horses. In those times the experiences of John R. Murdock in handling horses and dealing in cattle gave him a ripened judgment far beyond his years. Those days also developed within him a rare judgment in handling all kinds of live stock, a judgment which turned to most excellent account in later years of life.

In the spring of 1839 he was entrusted with one hundred head of the Clark cattle, which he had to drive from Far West to Illinois. In that migration of the Saints the people went in small squads. The individual responsibility was much greater than it was where they traveled in large parties. The boy, however, gave

excellent account of himself in this new responsibility. However, such a trust would not have been imposed upon him had he not given evidence earlier in his boyhood of his fidelity to every duty to which he had been called. Although a youth he must have established a reputation for industry, care, and judgment far beyond that enjoyed by boys of that age, for he was not yet thirteen years old.

He here also learned the first lessons which taught him the superiority of Brigham Young's leadership—a leadership that placed him in good service in Nauvoo in the exodus from Illinois and in the settlement of Utah. Thomas B. Marsh had fallen and in the absence of Joseph the leadership of the quorum of the twelve apostles fell upon Brigham Young, who immediately began, after the arrest of the Prophet, preparations for the migration of the Saints beyond the confines of Missouri; but Brigham was not left long at liberty to carry out this exodus. His enemies drove him from the scene; and Heber C. Kimball, who sought to take up the work where Brigham Young left off, was also handicapped. A committee had been appointed to prepare for the exodus and to se-

cure opportunities for all to leave, the poorest as well as those who were well-to-do.

The journey of John R. Murdock across Missouri, with his herd of cattle, in the spring of 1839, was the history of a hardship common to the men and women of that time. Through the mud and rain he made his way as best he could, a mere child upon whom fell a responsibility to see that his cattle did not scatter, that none of them escaped him, that they were properly fed and watered and so driven as not to diminish their value when they reached their journey's end.

Nor was it merely a matter of toil, of want, or of excessive responsibility. He was old enough to ask himself some thoughtful questions. What did it all mean? Whither was he going? When would he find a permanent resting place? How would he fare in a new land? How would his new neighbors treat him? He must have wondered at the providences of God.

However he had seen the hand of God manifest. He had reason to trust his leaders and somehow and somewhere he must have felt that peace and protection of God awaited him.

On the 26th day of April, 1839, in fulfillment of a prophecy which the enemy had declared should not come true, the Twelve, from the home of Timothy B. Clark, made their way early in the morning to the public square, where they placed in the ground a cornerstone of the temple, held meeting, sang, spoke, and finally took their departure for the East, preparatory to their missions, to which they had been called to the nations of the earth. At this time Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith were called to the quorum of the twelve apostles.

In the spring of 1839, John R. Murdock reached a land where he entered upon new experiences which characterized his stay in that state. To those who in youth enjoyed the quietude of home and peaceful surroundings, the early life of this boy is not comprehensible. From the days of his earliest recollections he lived in the midst of turmoil and persecution. The anger of the mob and their awful fury were the commonplace experiences of his early days. The atmosphere he breathed was charged with anxieties, hardships, responsibilities, and uncertainties. He became in those early days

surely a child of emergencies, and was taught to prepare himself for whatever fell in his way to do. It was in those days that he learned to make the most of every opportunity and so it happened, in later life, that he was found putting to good account resources of which others had neither the courage nor the ability to avail themselves. He has carried out in mature years the lessons which he learned in childhood.

CHAPTER III

BOYHOOD IN ILLINOIS

When the Saints saw that further effort to hold their own in Missouri would be fruitless, they began to look about for a new home. At this time Iowa was a territory, and to the northwest of them lay a district of country known as the Half-breed tract. Some effort was made to secure in Iowa land on which they might settle. The country across the Missouri, to the west of them, was the home of the red man, and a movement in that direction seemed quite impossible.

News of the sufferings of the Saints reached the ears of their neighbors on the east in Illinois, just across the Mississippi, in Adams county. A feeling of pity was awakened and the citizens of Quincy, in a friendly and hospitable attitude, offered their good services to the people in the hour of their need.

As the road went in those days, John R. Murdock had to travel with his cattle from Far West, about two hundred miles. New conditions awaited him, but he was a boy and could

forget, perhaps, sooner than those of mature years. However, by nature he was strong in his judgments, wedded to people and conditions he liked, and it was not easy for him to break loose. When he reached Quincy, Morris C. Phelps was in prison in Missouri. Mrs. Phelps was making preparation to relieve her husband or to render him, if possible, some assistance in making his escape, and if that were impossible, to remain near by to offer such help and comfort as her presence would give to him.

At this time, however, the boy's father felt the need of his assistance, and may, perhaps, have thought that it would relieve his foster parents from some feeling of responsibility if he took his son home at this time.

John was loath to leave the Phelps home; his foster parents were dear to him, and he says that for a long time after he was homesick because of the separation. However, he was obedient to his father's wishes, and with his brother Orrice he began to open a new farm in Adams county, Illinois. The lowlands and the wooded country of western Illinois were quite unlike the prairie country with which he had been familiar in Missouri,

and he therefore found it necessary to adjust himself to his new environments.

But the Saints did not remain long in Adams county. They had been welcomed by the people, and as long as they were an object of pity, feelings of kindness and hospitality were extended toward them; but they were a strong, vigorous class, made up of men and women of the deepest convictions and they further possessed indomitable wills. Their progressive methods, their independent character, and above all their pronounced religious views were so much at variance with the sects of that age that it became necessary for them to locate in a place where they could work in harmony with their own characteristics. Indeed, some apprehension began to be felt by a certain class in Quincy, who imagined the Mormons would lower the standard of wages.

On the 22nd of April, 1839, the Prophet reached his people in Illinois. Brigham Young and others had already explored the country northward for a suitable location, but no definite conclusions had been reached. The Prophet therefore began at once to investigate the situation, and finally determined to locate fifty

miles north of Quincy, at a little place in the bend of the river, called Commerce. Land was bought from Hugh White and Daniel H. Wells. This land became the nucleus of a series of purchases which later became the city of Nauvoo. This move meant another change for John R. Murdock, who went with his father to work on the new farm at Nauvoo. Here he assisted his father in raising two crops; and at intervals, when not occupied on the farm, he labored in making cooper ware.

While the Saints were struggling to subdue the soil in and about Nauvoo, another short change came to the life of the boy. Levi Murdock, a relative from Indiana, visited the boy's father and persuaded the latter to allow him to take the boy home with him to Indiana. Here he remained with his relative from fall to the following spring, a period of about eight months. That was another change—a change not only in environment, but in the social life and experiences of the boy. Here he was occupied in making sugar from the maple sap. All these changes at that peculiar age of life had much to do in training him for a life of emergencies, and thus it happened that in later

years he was always ready for the exigencies of any occasion. From his infancy he learned to become an opportunist, and as a consequence could more easily make himself the master of almost any situation than could those whose experiences were all of one peculiar kind.

The boy, however, had convictions of his own. There were developed within him purposes in life from which he could not be turned. He therefore decided to return to his father's home at Nauvoo; but between him and the Mississippi river there was a distance of something like three hundred miles to be traversed. The country was partially settled, the journey a long one, and the difficulties great. He had, however, by this time, put to the test the possibilities of his own energetic nature. He was not easily daunted. He had been doing things, hard things, from his earliest recollection; so he started out afoot with his knapsack and with only one dollar and twenty-five cents in money. The road was lonely and sometimes the settlements were as far as thirty miles apart, but he was persistent and finally reached his father's home in safety.

On his arrival home he accepted an offer to

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work for a man by the name of John Garner, and was put to work breaking up, with a large plow and five yoke of oxen, the prairie land which Garner was bringing under cultivation. This employment he pursued for two seasons. He evidently gave satisfaction to his employer, as he expected to return and continue his work of breaking up the prairie.

Before he took up the work of another season, his father required the boy to do some work for a man named Lott, in payment of two bushels of turnips which his father had obtained. This new work brought the boy under the favorable notice of Cornelius P. Lott, who was at this time the superintendent of the Prophet Joseph's farm. The attachment of Father Lott for the boy led him to induce John R. Murdock to remain with him, thus his surroundings were again changed. He had to adjust himself once more to a new home, and to make himself agreeable to its inmates and useful to his employer. This brought him into contact with Almira Henrietta Lott, a daughter of his employer, a girl at that time about thirteen years of age, and whom he subsequently married.

This arrangement with the Lott family brought John R. Murdock into somewhat closer relations with the Prophet, as he now became an employee on Joseph Smith's farm, about three miles east of the Temple in Nauvoo. The farm land belonging to the Saints in Nauvoo during that time naturally extended to the east of the Mississippi into Hancock county. Much of this land was prairie, and had to be broken up by means of strong teams, consisting of four or five yoke of oxen. On the farm where the boy was now employed, there was a large frame building, about forty by sixty feet, the timber of which he had hauled. Around the farm was one of those peculiar so-called "worm" railed fences. Besides, the land was fenced in part by sod. The house on this half-section farm was a frame structure of eight rooms, four on the ground floor and four upstairs.

This farm lay, so to speak, along the cross roads of the country. Nauvoo became the largest city in the state, and travel therefore would be naturally quite extensive from this City of the Saints in the direction of Carthage, of Quincy, of Monmouth and other places. In

those days, with the exception of the river traffic, most travel was by horse teams; and the farm house of Joseph Smith was naturally in itself an attractive place.

There was a newspaper in the City of Nauvoo, known as the *Times and Seasons*, and later there was established in that neighborhood the *Warsaw Signal*. For a time also there was a newspaper in Carthage, but generally speaking, much of the information in those days came by word of mouth; and as those were exciting times, as well as busy times in the history of the Church, this boy, no doubt, listened with intense interest to those discussions which occupied the thoughts and feelings of his fellow religionists.

The Saints had not been long in the country before some of the Missourians began to kidnap the Mormons in out-of-the-way places, take them across the Mississippi and subject them to inhuman treatment. As a matter of self-protection and to guard against the disposition on the part of some to scatter out in different parts of the state, the Saints were counseled to settle exclusively in Hancock county, and across the river in Iowa in Lee county.

This call centered the activity of the Saints within narrower limits and had a tendency to give to that part of the country a more perfect cultivation than the land in the west received in those days when the people were scattered over large areas. The rapid manner in which Nauvoo grew and the marvelous growth of wealth in so short a period, all demonstrate the superiority of the co-operative methods employed by the Saints at that time. This rapid growth, both in wealth and population, naturally excited the enmity of the average westerner in those days. Here, too, the Saints learned important lessons in agriculture: and the boy, who was then, as afterward throughout his entire life, a close observer, received valuable lessons in tilling the soil. His training on the Prophet's farm, and his experiences in Missouri had, therefore, taught him to gather up all the available resources with which he was surrounded, and apply them to his immediate needs. This training, together with his natural adaptability, made him in after life an excellent financier.

In June, 1841, an effort was made, through a requisition by Governor Boggs of Missouri

and Governor Carlin of Illinois, to have Joseph Smith brought back again to Missouri to be tried on the charges under which he had been indicted before he escaped from that state. It was now over two years since he had left Missouri; and while the Saints were staggering under the blow that had been so cruelly inflicted upon them by the Missourians, the latter, no doubt, felt that the Saints would fall beneath it. However, their recovery and their wonderful success in building up the City of Nauvoo, led the Missourians to break out again in their animosity against the Mormons. What could have been the thoughts of this young man, when, now only fifteen years old, as he beheld the malicious purpose with which his Prophet and his people were hounded. Could he have anticipated, then, another exodus? If not at that time, he must have thought such a thing possible, when he learned of the predictions of the Prophet in August, 1842, while the Montrose, Iowa. In his prediction there the Prophet says: "I prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death by our

persecutors, or lose their lives in consequence of exposure or disease, and some of you will live to go and assist in making settlements and in building cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains."

John R. Murdock learned in Nauvoo some of the peculiar methods of the adversary. Among the Saints then, unscrupulous characters were found. Men would take advantage of agitation and excitement and prejudice of the times to gratify their own evil inclinations. At times the country round about was infested by thieves; men followed their natural inclinations under a religious guise. They concealed under the cloak of sanctimony their ill-gotten gains and the fruits of their thefts. There were those, no doubt, naturally honest who were now and again made the victims of evil deceptions; but John R. Murdock was not among that class. He was a boy, as he since has been a man, of pronounced convictions, and from the outset of his life in his childhood days, he was most fortunate in his surroundings. He had before him the example of excellent men; he was industrious and was car-

rying out a definite injunction by earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. Those who knew John R. Murdock in later life well understood that he was a good judge of men. He was not easily carried off his feet in excitement, and his excellent discrimination enabled him to determine a safe and correct policy to pursue. To that judgment, which was so pronounced in him in after life, he brought the experiences of his boyhood days.

When in and about Nauvoo he learned the lesson of discerning good from evil spirits. Those who have had familiar acquaintance with John R. Murdock know how quick he always was to gather up the experiences of those early days and apply them as a test when new conditions arose and when men, through their sophistries, undertook to mislead either him or his friends. His experiences in those early trying times were indeed remarkable, and it is doubtful whether any one in the Church had a more varied and remarkable career, both in childhood and in boyhood than that which fell to his lot.

An attempt on the life of ex-Governor Boggs of Missouri, on May 6th, 1842, gave rise to re-

newed effort to secure the Prophet Joseph's presence in the state of Missouri. Another requisition was therefore made by the governor of that commonwealth on the governor of Illinois. The Prophet, however, was not in Nauvoo, but had gone on a visit with his wife to her sister's home in Dixon, Iowa, where the Prophet was seized unawares and after some effort secured an investigation of his case on the writ of habeas corpus before the officers in Nauvoo. His return to Nauvoo created considerable excitement throughout the city and in the surrounding neighborhood. There was a grand demonstration on his return, people going out by the thousands to meet him. These interesting times were all familiar to John R. Murdock, who during his labor on the Prophet's farm, had frequent opportunities to meet him, to learn something of the character, disposition and life of the Prophet Joseph. Of him he says: "He was one of the noblest and most admirable men that one could ever meet, both for his physical and mental attractions. Any one in his company would feel that he was with his superior, yet he was so kind and so lovable. He often brought his family to

the farm, for his family and Father Lott were on terms of great intimacy. We all passionately loved and revered our Prophet. He used to relate to us many instances of his life. In common labor, as mowing, chopping, cradling, and so forth he was an expert. He scarcely ever met his equal as an athlete, and he took great delight in all healthful sports."

This boy's conception of the Prophet was unlike that of the sectarian world in his day. There was nothing unscriptural in a young man acting as a Prophet of God, since both Samuel and Daniel of old were youths, but somehow or other the idea of old age is associated with the ideas of both prophets and patriarchs. The long flowing beard, the graceful mantel, the slow, dignified movement, long hair, and the absent gaze were the leading features in the portrayal of prophets by the great artists of the middle ages. Joseph Smith was a young man, worked on the farm beside this boy, John R. Murdock, and told him in the simple language of childhood the experiences of his prophetic career. There was nothing in the Prophet's appearance to arouse any feelings of

superstition; he was a man lovable, confiding, and inspiring.

John R. Murdock had learned from his earliest recollection that political differences were a source of intense animosity among those who belonged simply to the contending national parties of his time. These parties were like great mill-stones, grinding whatever came between them. He further learned that bitter as political controversies could be, that religious hatred united with political hatred constituted the most awful enmity that can enter the human heart. It required the utmost adroitness to keep from between these two mill-stones of political contentions—an adroitness which the Saints of God, then, and even in earlier times in the history of ancient Israel did not possess; for the children of darkness are shrewder in their generation than the children of light.

The writer can not here refrain from answering the very common accusation that politics on the part of the Church is the source of the Church's trouble. In such accusations the inference is drawn that the elders of the Church are therefore responsible for the persecutions which beset the Saints. Now, as a

matter of fact, there is nothing new in the assertion that politics have been a source of trouble to the Saints of God ; but it must be remembered that politics were a source of trouble to God's children in ancient days. If the reader will take up a map of ancient history, he will quickly see that Palestine of ancient times lay between the Assyrians on the east, and the Babylonians on the west. These great nations were constantly at war with each other. The ancient Israelites sometimes held the balance of power between them, and these nations were constantly seeking the favor of the Israelites, so there grew up among the Saints of God in those days a partisan spirit. Some were classified with the Babylonians, and others with the Egyptians. Sometimes the prophet of God took a hand in politics, and warned the Saints in those days against relying on one or the other of these great nations. The reader will find frequent references in Isaiah to his warnings against the trust which those of the Egyptian party put in that country, and in its horses and chariots. There were political contentions in the days of Christ. Political persecutions followed the Saints of God in the

days of the apostles, and later throughout the Roman empire. It may be remarked that from ancient times up to our own day there has been a peculiar disposition to look to one or another great party for some sort of political salvation.

In the days of Joseph, the Prophet himself and the Saints generally no doubt struggled to keep from being drawn between the millstones that ground the Saints then, and that have ground them in past days. Perhaps the Lord was not averse to the grinding process. Before the bran can be separated from the flour, some sort of grinding has always been found necessary. When the wheat has been ground, a slight breeze and a little bolting separates easily the bran. So in God's dispensation the religious persecutions of the times have kept separate the nourishing kernel, the bread of life, from the bran, which is found in the companionship of those unworthy ones who somehow or other gain fellowship in the society of the elect.

During the closing year of the Prophet Joseph's life, John R. Murdock, though then between seventeen and eighteen years of age, learned considerable about politics in church

and state. He learned that political power was really the only power that a majority of the people of Illinois either respected or hated, according to their political affiliations. The excuse for here commenting on church and state in his biography is his well known views, expressed both in public and private on the subject. The writer here comments upon conversations which he had with Elder Murdock on political topics. John R. Murdock used to say that the two greatest public influences were political and religious, and he thought it unfortunate that men exercising the powers that arise from these influences could not be more tolerant toward each other. In past ages the church overawed the state and assumed powers it had no right to exercise. Now the pendulum is swinging to the other extreme, and the state is becoming intolerant toward the church. "For my part," he was wont to say, "I have come to recognize the political power of the saloon element, the political power of organized labor, the political power of wealth and great corporations, and I expect that influential religious men will have their share of political power. They are naturally leaders in

society and have their convictions on matters of state. The fact is, there must be some allowances made on both sides if we are to get along well. We must learn to respect each other."

He was not mistaken, however, about the motives which governed those that expelled the Saints from Nauvoo. The motives could not be accounted for in political differences. The awful hatred of those times was deeper than politics, deeper than social differences. It extended to the very depths of hell.

When the Expositor printing press was destroyed by order of the mayor of Nauvoo because it was a public nuisance, the whole atmosphere of the Saints was charged with fear, dread, and deep-seated anxiety. Mob violence even without the law began to manifest itself so intensely that he expected something like the same treatment which the Saints received in Missouri. There was one difference, however, which was manifest, the Saints were more numerous. They had a well organized militia. The most natural question that people asked themselves in those times was whether they should stand their ground and fight it out.

Numerous as they were, they were not in numbers sufficiently strong to cope with the state of Illinois and perhaps with the state of Missouri. If the Saints were more numerous, the enemy had likewise grown to immensely greater proportions. What the Latter-day Saints would do under the circumstances was the absorbing topic of the times.

Young Murdock had an unbounded faith in the courage and wisdom of the Prophet, and he went to Nauvoo to learn all that he could about the situation. He was present there when Joseph Smith stood upon the framework of an unfinished building, in full uniform, surrounded by the Nauvoo Legion, of which he was a member, and listened to the remarkable words that fell from the Prophet's lips on that occasion: "I call God and angels to witness that I have unsheathed my sword with a firm determination that these people shall have their legal rights, and be protected from mob violence, or my blood shall be spilled upon the ground like water, and my body consigned to the silent tomb. While I live I will never tamely submit to the dominion of cursed mobocracy. I would welcome death rather than

submit to this ; and it would be sweet, O, sweet, to rest in the grave, rather than submit to this oppression, agitation, annoyance, alarm upon alarm any longer."

What must have been the effect of such words as they fell on the ears of this boy, not yet eighteen years of age ! The words were somewhat ominous, and were prophetic of the great tragedy which ended the Prophet's life. It was a solemn occasion—one of those which men do not forget after having witnessed such a scene as followed the Prophet's declaration. There are some things in this world that are so solemn and so impressed upon the recollection of the past that they are never forgotten, and it is safe to say that this boy's subsequent life carried with it a touch of the solemnity which he felt on that occasion ; besides, it was an occasion which he often called to mind and upon which he frequently conversed in the subsequent years of his life.

That the Prophet was fully conscious of his approaching death is found in his request that his brother Hyrum go with his family to Cincinnati, so that he might succeed the Prophet as President of the Church, in case his fore-

bodings were realized. There was in those days a movement to and fro between Carthage and Nauvoo. Along the road was Joseph's farm, where young Murdock labored. That farm was a source of great pride to the Prophet. It was well kept by those who were intrusted with its care.

At first the Prophet acted with a view to self-preservation. He would have gone to the Rocky Mountains in quest of peace, and to be isolated far from his enemies. One naturally asks the question, would the Saints have followed him; would they have abandoned their beautiful Nauvoo; and if they had done so, would they not have looked back upon the "flesh pots" of that beautiful city and longed to return? That was not what happened. They were driven, plundered, outraged. When they set out upon that great pioneer journey there were no regrets left behind them. In it all they now see God's providence; and the lessons of that exodus are sources of faith to hundreds of thousands of people who have realized more fully as a consequence, that they are God's people, and like Israel of old are, after all, dependent upon his mercies.

There was also another testimony—that which Joseph sealed by his blood. That testimony grows in significance and in far-reaching consequence to the Latter-day Saints, as time goes on. When, therefore, the Prophet yielded to the demands of his enemies and set out upon that fatal journey from Nauvoo, John R. Murdock was one who gazed in wonderment and silence upon the Prophet, who declared that he was “going like a lamb to the slaughter, but calm as a summer’s morning.” “I have,” he said, “a conscience void of offense toward God and all men. I shall die innocent, and it shall be said of me, he was murdered in cold blood.”

The Prophet halted at his farm, where the boy had another opportunity of witnessing the man whose influence upon his young life had been more powerful than that of any other man. That influence upon him gave a setting to the character of his manhood, and to the unyielding faith which carried him through trying places, and was in a measure to him a guiding star throughout life.

“If one of you had such a farm,” said Joseph, “and knew you would not see it any more,

you would want to take a good look at it for the last time." Did the boy take a good look at the Prophet? He had always looked upon him with admiration and reverence; but a boy so young would not have realized what it all meant. He was like the disciples of Jesus,—there were things that he ought not to know, for he could not endure them. So we trace him throughout life, moving day by day according to the light and testimony which God vouchsafed for his guidance. That to John R. Murdock was given the privilege of a witness at such a time in the history of his life, and in the history of the Church was perhaps one of the greatest sources of pride that he ever felt.

As the Prophet stopped at the farm and bade the Lott family there good-bye, he did not forget the boy who was with them. He says that the Prophet was escorted by a party consisting of about twelve mounted men. Among them were officers of the state, who had arrested him. There were also some of the brethren present. The boy was at the farm when the news of the awful tragedy at Carthage was brought by George D. Grant. He was also a witness of the

lamentations of the people, and joined in the mourning which the Saints manifested over the death of their Prophet. It is said: "The groans and sobs and shrieks grew deeper and louder till the sound resembled the roar of a mighty tempest, or the slow, deep roar of a distant tornado." He was also present at the Mansion House where the bodies lay in state for some time. He witnessed the funeral services which were held there, and was among those who, in a prayerful and silent demeanor, were wondering who could and who would take the Prophet's place. He knew that Joseph Smith was not the Church, and was old enough to understand that the mantle of the Prophet's authority had been placed upon the leaders' shoulders by divine authority. He still had faith that the same divine power would designate the future leader to the people, and that Joseph's mantle would fall where God designed it should be.

The young boy must have shared between the memorable 27th of June, 1844, and February, 1846, much of the uncertainty that pervaded the body of the Saints settled in and about Nauvoo. Between twenty and thirty

thousand people were numbered among the Prophet's followers. From every worldly judgment their case seemed hopeless. The Nauvoo Legion numbered about five thousand. It could not cope with the overwhelming forces of the Illinois militia. Although the Prophet was dead, the hatred towards the Saints had not abated; indeed, they felt it more keenly than ever because Joseph stood between them and the murderous intent of blood-thirsty mobs. The people were put upon their own mettle. Each one now, more than any other time in the Church, must decide for himself and cast his die for good or ill. Those who were weary and heart-sore might drop by the wayside if they chose.

The Prophet, however, had foreseen the days of trial which awaited the Saints. As he turned his gaze for the last time upon Nauvoo when leaving it for Carthage, he remarked: "This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens. Little do they know the trials that await them." "Boys," he said, as he passed the Masonic Hall, "if I don't come back, take care of yourselves." Joseph knew and declared what the Saints have

confirmed by subsequent experience: "They seek the blood of every man in whose heart dwells a single spark of the fulness of the gospel."

If Nauvoo was dear to the heart of its founder and Prophet, it was also dear to the hearts of the people. They were not reconciled to the thought of its abandonment. Its enemies, by their intolerance and cruelty, not only caused distress and mourning, but had awakened a spirit of resistance in the hearts of the Saints. John R. Murdock was a member of the Nauvoo Legion. Would he have to yield to the demands of the enemy, or would he have to fight? He was ready to respond to the call of duty and held himself ready for action at the bugle call. The thought of a struggle at arms could not have carried with it in his heart much hope of success.

Little by little the pressure upon the Saints grew stronger and stronger. They witnessed the determination of the enemy to drive them—God alone knew where! The Saints before long learned that they must go. When it came John R. Murdock's turn to look for the last time upon that farm which his own hands had

helped to beautify, he felt something of the sorrows which the Prophet realized when he said good-bye to it.

Upon the Prophet's death, John R. Murdock came under a new leadership—a leadership whose strength and spiritual guidance he recognized from the outset—a leadership to which he became thoroughly devoted in the upbuilding of his own manhood and in the uplifting of the communities over which he presided for many years. As the new leadership fastened itself so strongly upon the life and character of this young man, it is interesting to know how he first came to recognize it, and then we shall see why he was always loyal to it.

He was not eighteen years old when the Prophet and his brother Hyrum were martyred, but he was old enough to consider seriously what was at that time a new and important question—the leadership of the Church. There had been a First Presidency and there was a quorum of the Twelve Apostles upon whom the Prophet had conferred the keys of the new dispensation, and whose right it was to exercise the power of control when

the Prophet should pass away. Sidney Rigdon, however, was a counselor to the Prophet Joseph at the time of the latter's death. The people had not learned then what is now simple and commonplace knowledge, that the death of the president ends the control of the presidency. Sidney Rigdon had been sent to Pittsburg, and Joseph had thanked God that he was out of the way; for the Prophet knew the decline in Sidney Rigdon's faith and his inability to lead the Church. It is said that there were at that time three different views on this important question of Church discipline. There were those who thought Sidney Rigdon should lead, become a "guardian of the Church;" others looked to the Twelve, and there were others, who though perhaps not different, were nevertheless in a state of confusion without any particular conviction upon the subject. Those who were supporting Sidney Rigdon were not a body of men who commanded the respect of the most faithful Latter-day Saints.

Sidney Rigdon made his appearance upon the scene shortly after the death of the Prophet when only a few of the Twelve were present. A day was appointed when the matter of lead-

ership should be presented to the people. For them, it was their utmost good fortune that Brigham Young and a sufficient number of the Twelve, constituting a majority, appeared upon the scene just before this important meeting—perhaps the most important meeting in the Church—convened. The question of leadership was involved, and the people were to vote upon that question. Sidney Rigdon had some time before addressed the Saints. They listened respectfully to his message. His claims did not satisfy. His spirit did not feed their hungry souls. President Young also addressed the people.

It was the good fortune of John R. Murdock to be present at this meeting and determine for himself the guidance to which thereafter he would give his loyalty. Of Brigham Young's remarks, he said: "It was the greatest manifestation I ever beheld, for the voice, the gesture, the whole appearance of President Young was just exactly as if the Prophet Joseph stood there in person." Such a spiritual manifestation must indeed have deeply impressed this young man. He had seen the stars of heaven fall in a most miraculous manner

he had seen remarkable prophecies fulfilled, the healing power of God had been abundantly manifested within his observation; the prophetic character of Joseph Smith had indelibly marked itself upon his soul; but the appearance of Brigham Young on that occasion was the greatest manifestation that he ever beheld.

No wonder the young man gave instant loyalty to the new leadership. No wonder that his devotion was rewarded by the honorable and trusted positions which he held in the Church. From that day on he followed the new Prophet as a guiding star. Nor was his confidence and loyalty ever weakened or ever surrendered to any exigency or even to any misgivings.

He witnessed nearly two years of the trying scenes in and about Nauvoo, after the Prophet's death. He saw men in high places fall by the wayside. He witnessed the spiritual manifestations grow obscure in those who were contentious and who claimed honor at the hands of the people. He was, therefore, prepared to leave Nauvoo and those who were recreant to the cause of God behind him.

Those parting scenes were object lessons in his life, and he never forgot them, nor did he forget the lesson taught by those unworthy leaders he left behind when he said good-bye to Illinois.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE MORMON BATTALION

John R. Murdock, when the advanced company of Latter-day Saints left Nauvoo, was not quite twenty years of age. He was in the prime and vigor of early manhood and had already at that time of life more experience in pioneer work and encountering the difficulties of a new country than come to most pioneers in an entire lifetime. His early experiences fitted him for the new undertaking—an undertaking that was to tax his energies and endurance more than anything he could imagine, even from the uncertainties of those times. He knew something about what it required to make a long journey, and well he realized the truth of the old adage, "Well begun, half done."

The Saints began their exodus from Nauvoo on the fourth and sixth of February. They exchanged the conveniences of their homes for tent life in midwinter. Fast as they crossed the Mississippi they gathered at Sugar Creek, where they remained some three weeks pre-

paratory to a general advancement along the journey. Intense cold came upon them. The Mississippi froze over so that wagons could cross on the ice. While such conditions facilitated the movement of the Saints over the river, it entailed intense suffering. When a thaw came the roads were almost impassable. In the midst of these difficulties the young man was gaining a new experience. He was learning something of the helplessness of a large class of people in the midst of difficulties. He discovered that many were wholly unfitted for emergencies, that they had to be instructed; and from the outset his own valuable experience naturally made him an instructor of the helpless in those times, and consequently, though young, a leader among his fellow-men.

Along the route across Iowa there were three important stations, Sugar Creek, Garden City, and Pisgah. Just about the time the advance company reached the banks of the Missouri river, there appeared at Mount Pisgah, James Allen, a captain in the United States army. In his communication to the Saints he says: "I have come among you, instructed to visit the Mormon camp and accept the service,

for twelve months, of four or five companies of the Mormon men who may be willing to serve their country for the period in our present war with Mexico." The leaders, however, at this time were located at Council Bluffs, and Captain Allen set out at once for that place for the purpose of consulting them. On July the first, he held an interview with President Young, to whom he presented a communication from Col. S. W. Kerny, in which the colonel says: "Sir—It is understood that there is a large body of Mormons who are desirous of emigrating to California for the purpose of settling in that country, and I have therefore to direct that you (Captain James Allen) will proceed to their camps and endeavor to raise from amongst them four or five companies of volunteers to join me in my expedition to that country. You will give the Mormons distinctly to understand that I wish to take them as volunteers for twelve months, and that they will be marched to California, receiving pay and allowances during the above time, and at its expiration they will be discharged and allowed to retain, as their private property, the guns and accoutrements to be furnished to

them at this post. Each company will be allowed four women as laundresses, who will travel with the company, receiving rations, and the other allowances given to the laundresses of our army. Considering the foregoing conditions, which are hereby pledged to the Mormons, and which will be faithfully kept by me and other officers in behalf of the government of the United States, I cannot doubt, but that you will in a few days be able to raise five hundred young and efficient men for this expedition. Signed at Fort Leavenworth, June 19th, 1846."

It will be noted that the letter of Colonel Kerny to Captain Allen contained an assurance that the Mormons would be treated fairly in the matter and the pledges made with them kept. This call for volunteers brought about important changed conditions. The young men qualified for enlistment were of that class greatly needed for the hardships of pioneer work among the Saints, and such a condition, therefore, made the exodus of the Mormon people across the plains from the Missouri river all the more trying.

President Young, with the other leaders, began at once to raise the required

number of companies. There were not enough young men then at Council Bluffs to respond to the call. He, therefore, on a mounted horse with a few others, set out for Mt. Pisgah, that from among the people there the necessary number of volunteers might be obtained. The sight of a prophet of God riding over the hills of western Iowa, to the unbeliever and Christian minister must have seemed indeed a remarkable and somewhat ludicrous situation. It is perhaps a circumstance wholly unique in the religious history of the world. Those were times of great emergencies. Leaders had to be practical men, understanding from personal experience the work at hand, and having the ability to do whatever came to hand. It was a peculiar quality of generalship, which required unusual talents and a genius for great things.

Naturally, such a call would create considerable confusion. There was hurry and worry. On the 20th of July the first companies started or set out for their march down the Missouri to Fort Leavenworth. John R. Murdock enlisted in the Mormon Battalion on the 16th day of July, 1846. From that date it

would be nearly two months before he reached his twentieth birthday.

This divided the pioneers into two groups. The advance body of the Church set out the following year on its journey for Salt Lake Valley, and the Mormon Battalion was to reach the same objective point around the circuit of what are now Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Nevada.

From the detailed account of these two pioneer journeys as given by the historians of each, it is quite within the range of truth to say that the Battalion had the greater hardships to endure. As time goes on, the details of this great march across the American desert come into more prominent interest and are appreciated more and more by those valiant and enduring men of the Mormon Battalion.

Of the march from Council Bluffs to Fort Leavenworth, John R. Murdock says: "I bade farewell to my friends and people and started for California. In the beginning the government was unable to supply us with the necessary cooking utensils, clothing, etc., for the campaign, hence our cooking was very crude. We had to mix our bread in the mouth

of a flour sack, roll our dough on a stick and roast it by the fire until it was baked. We broiled our meat on the coals and made our coffee in any available vessel. In this way we traveled down the Missouri river to Fort Leavenworth, a distance of two hundred miles. There we received our clothing, blankets, knapsacks and all other equipments necessary for a soldier's kit; we also received here our first payment of eight dollars a month. Preparations were then made to commence our march across the plains to Santa Fe. I was selected to drive a company team of six mules, all wild and unbroken for use except one, the saddle mule. In driving around the fort one day the team ran away, and I was thrown out, and the wagon, which fortunately, was not loaded, passed over my body and very nearly killed me. I was so badly hurt that I had to be carried to camp on a blanket by my comrades. The effects of that accident I feel to this day. After remaining in Fort Leavenworth for nineteen days we commenced the march. I was then able to drive my team. We started on the 19th of August, 1846."

After reaching Fort Leavenworth each sold-

ier drew \$42.00, his clothing money for the year. Along with the Mormon Battalion at that time some of the elders took the journey preparatory to their mission to Great Britain. Much of the money paid to the soldiers was sent by them to their families and brethren at Council Bluffs for the purpose of aiding the main body of the Church in reaching its destination. The missionaries were also aided by the liberality of the soldiers in making their way to the mission field. It will, from these circumstances, be seen that the condition of the Mormon Battalion, when compared with other volunteers, was most unfortunate, and that they had to depend upon themselves for the means necessary to supply them comfortable clothing on their long and hazardous journey. These soldiers, however, had left behind them either wives or parents, and cheerfully gave their first money to the support of those who were comparatively helpless. Nor was this all. From Santa Fe money was sent back to Council Bluffs to sustain the families of the soldiers there. Such an expedition as they were setting out upon had no comparison anywhere in history.

The country over which they were passing, so many thousand miles was almost wholly uninhabited. Unexplored deserts lay before them. Nor had they any knowledge of the nature of the country, its vegetation or its climate. True, much of it had been explored, but knowledge of its explorations had not been widely circulated. The leaders had some knowledge of certain objective points and of the nature of the country that lay between them and these forts.

"It was eight hundred miles," says the subject of this sketch, "from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, and through a very wild country, indeed. Except the teamsters, all had to walk. There was much suffering on account of the want of water and extreme heat in a desert country. Being foot-sore we found the march terribly hard, and there was much sickness from the change of water. In order to reach Santa Fe at a given time we had to make the last hundred miles of the journey by a forced march, and traveled therefore night and day. We reached Santa Fe on the 10th of October 1846."

Something of the heat on that journey may

be gathered from the fact that the thermometer at Fort Leavenworth was 101 in the shade and 135 degrees in the sun. Another circumstance was distressing to the soldiers, and that was the death on the 23rd of August of Captain Allen. He was a kind-hearted man, and from the outset won the confidence and good will of the Battalion. He was succeeded later by Lieut. A. J. Smith, contrary to the wishes of the men.

The first part of the journey was made measurably safe from the fact that on the 11th of September the Battalion reached the Arkansas river whose banks they followed for about one hundred miles. It would be quite natural for such a body of men to find petty annoyances that would create some discontent. Before they reached their first objective point and on the 16th of September Captain Higgins was detailed to take a number of families to the Mexican town of Pueblo. This circumstance aroused some fear that there might be other separations and the Battalion so divided as to be thrown among the Missourians who were distasteful as well as hateful to them. Another circumstance of a more serious nature was the conduct toward the soldiers of Doctor

George P. Sanderson, a Missourian physician, to whom was intrusted the health of the men. In him they had no confidence and were fully assured that he had even administered poison in the medicine which he distributed among them. They were so sure, that many of them refused to take his medicine and preferred to endure the sickness from which they were suffering rather than to endanger their lives at his hands. George Sanderson, like hundreds of others, is known to history only through the annals of the Church. He never suspected that the character by which he would be known in generations to come is the character given to him by the Mormon people. That, indeed, is a remarkable circumstance in the history of the Mormon Church.

Before leaving Santa Fe for Southern California, those considered in an unfit condition to endure the hardships that were sure to come to the Battalion were taken to Pueblo for the winter where they arrived on the 17th day of November, requiring thirty days for the march. John R. Murdock was among those who took up that long and memorable journey of eleven hundred miles across the southern deserts to

the Pacific Ocean. At that season of the year they were in the highlands of the Colorado and New Mexico. They were insufficiently clad to endure the cold with any degree of comfort.

They had not long left Santa Fe before it became necessary to send some of their teams back. Those who returned encountered unusual hardships. They were equipped with one wagon and four yoke of oxen and rations sufficient for only five days. The distance to be traveled by them on their return was three hundred miles. This was another parting which the soldiers of the Battalion regretted, and the parting scenes were very affecting. John R. Murdock was still among those who made the march to California. He says: "We passed through a wild, unsettled country whose only inhabitants were hostile Indians. Provisions were scarce at Santa Fe, so we were not well supplied with food at the beginning of this long march. The country was rough, rugged, and mountainous. Water was to be found only at long intervals and there was consequently great suffering among the men. We were put on half rations and later, on third rations during the journey. The sheep and cattle driven along

for fresh meat became so poor that they had to be killed and taken as rations,—a sorry lot of stuff it was. The rations were weighed out to us, and two or three little Mexican sheep could be hung at once on a pair of hang balances.”

The parts of the country through which they passed had large herds of wild cattle, many of which were killed and used for food by the Battalion. These cattle, however, in places proved themselves dangerous to the march of the men. Sometimes the bulls would lead in a furious stampede, and it became necessary for the Battalion to guard itself by shooting down the cattle when they could, and by using every possible means of keeping out of these great wild cattle rushes. Along the road down the river San Pedro, the attacks became quite frequent. At one time there was what the Battalion boys termed a “bull fight.” Two men were severely injured, one mule was gored to death while others were knocked down and hurt. “I was engaged in the bull fight and was in all the forced marches across the desert,” says John R. Murdock, in giving an account of that journey.

Those familiar with the character of south-

ern Arizona, especially from Tuscon to the coast, will realize something of the hardships to be endured in crossing the deserts at that early period in our history. The Battalion reached the San Luis Rey mission on the 27th of January, 1847, and the San Diego mission on the 29th. "I do not believe," says this young Battalion boy, "that the parallel to that march to the coast is on record when all circumstances are considered. My usual weight was one hundred and sixty pounds and it was only one hundred and twenty when we reached the coast. During the journey, everything, even the hide and parts of the entrails of the animals were used for food. The teams became so jaded that we undertook to raft a portion of the provisions down the Gila river. The food was all lost in the river, thus greatly lessening the already scant supply. We obtained some wheat, corn, and beans from the Pima Indians, a tribe that lived along the Gila river. Upon the southern route there were some deserts from seventy to ninety miles in extent and not a drop of water was to be found on them. We had quite an experience in crossing the Colorado river over which the men had to carry most

of the supplies and wade the river up to their arm pits. From the Colorado to Warner's, the first settlement in California, it was about two hundred and thirty miles, and there were very few watering places. When we reached that place we obtained plenty of fresh, fat beef, but had nothing else except coffee. We had had no flour for weeks. When we reached the coast we obtained some provisions, but still no flour."

That his estimation of the difficulties of such a perilous journey was well within the truth, is fully attested by the statement of their commanding officer, Col. P. St. George Cook, who writes as follows :

"HEADQUARTERS, MISSION OF SAN DIEGO,
January 30, 1847.

"Lieutenant Colonel commanding congratulates the Battalion on its safe arrival on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and the conclusion of its march of over two thousand miles. History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry; nine-tenths of it through a wilderness, where nothing but savages and wild beasts are found, or deserts where, for want of water, there is no living creature.

There, with almost hopeless labor, we have dug deep wells, which the future traveler will enjoy. Without a guide who had traversed them, we have ventured into trackless prairies, where water was not found for several marches. With crowbar and pick-ax in hand we have worked our way over mountains, which seemed to defy aught save the wild goat, and hewed a passage through a chasm of living rock, more narrow than our wagons. To bring these first wagons to the Pacific we have preserved the strength of the mules by herding them over large tracts, which you have laboriously guarded without loss."

During the sojourn of the Battalion in the San Luis Rey and San Diego mission the soldiers did not relax their energies, but set themselves at work building houses and giving an air of life to everything about them. "My company," he says, "was stationed at San Luis Rey, about one hundred and fifty miles below Los Angeles. At the latter place the other four companies of the Battalion were stationed. Later, Company B, the one to which I belonged, was sent to San Diego, about fifty miles

further south. While in that country there grew up quite an extreme practice among the soldiers of hunting and purchasing wild horses, and some of them won for themselves a reputation in their successful efforts in riding them. Company B remained in San Diego until about the first of July, 1847, when it left for Los Angeles where it joined the other companies of the Battalion.

Some persuasion was offered to induce the soldiers to re-enlist, but the great majority of them understood very well that they were needed by the Saints who were then on their way across the plains. They were mustered out on the 16th of July, 1847, just one year from the day they enlisted. Preparations were immediately begun for their homeward journey. There were two routes open to them, the southern and the northern. It was now mid-summer and the unexplored deserts of southern California and Nevada were evidently thought to be dangerous for the return journey. The northern route was therefore selected, and after appointing officers, the Battalion made its way in the direction of the Sacramento Valley.

From Sacramento they crossed the Sierra

Nevada mountains and reached the head-waters of the Truckee river. While in this part of Nevada, they met Samuel Brannan who had taken a company of Saints by water to California. Brannan gave the soldiers a very discouraging account of the conditions in Salt Lake Valley, where, he said, there was a heavy frost every month in the year. The climate, he said, was so dry that nothing could be raised without irrigation, and the water was so cold that it would freeze the seeds that were put into the ground. Captain James Brown, however, who met them about the same time, brought word from the Twelve Apostles that those who had not means for their support had better return to California for work, and come to the valleys later on. John R. Murdock, however, forged his way along by the way of Humboldt, Goose Creek, and Fort Hall, which was then situated on Snake river about two hundred miles north of Salt Lake City. Here, he and his comrades obtained some provisions. They paid fifty cents a pound for bacon, and twenty-five cents a pound for flour. Leaving Fort Hall they crossed Bear river and reached Salt Lake City, October 12th, 1847.

CHAPTER V

PIONEERS IN SALT LAKE VALLEY

The members of the Mormon Battalion who came in that year increased the number now located in the "Old Fort" to something like eighteen hundred. The son, John R., found his father and family who had only a short time before arrived in the valley. The vicissitudes of the father had been those common to the Latter-day Saints in general. After the death of John's mother, the father married in 1836 Amaranda Turner in the state of New York. This wife he took with him to Missouri, where, after about a year's residence in that state she died, leaving no children. In 1837, the father married Electa Allen, by whom he had three children, Gideon, Hyrum, and Rachel. This third wife died in Nauvoo in 1845. Before starting West he married a fourth wife with whom he journeyed across the plains to Salt Lake City. This wife, however, survived her husband but never bore to him any children. When, therefore, the son reached Salt Lake

City, he found his father, the last wife, and the three children of Electa Murdock.

As the "Old Fort" was the home of the pioneers during the summer of 1847, the Murdock family lived there. The son, ever dutiful to the obligations he felt toward his father, began at once to make his first home in the valleys. "We made adobes and built a little house in the "Old Fort." I went into Red Butte and obtained timber to finish the house and got some fencing and firewood for the winter. I also made further preparation by getting forage for the stock."

His life that winter in the "Old Fort" was relieved of those intense hardships through which he had passed in the deserts of the South. It was a mild winter and the Saints had such social fellowship and pastime as to give some relief to a situation that was difficult in the extreme. Much of the winter was favorable to plowing, so that there were opportunities for a busy life. In the canyons and on these arid, parched lands might be seen the active work of Utah's pioneers.

"In the following spring," John R. Murdock says, "I took up a piece of property in Mill

Creek near Neff's mill. I built a log house and father's family moved up there. I brought a one-half bushel of wheat all the way from California with me. This, I planted, and reaped from it about ten bushels of wheat. This, with the small quantity of immatured corn which we had raised, constituted the next year's supply of breadstuff for the family."

When the necessity of reserving all the seed possible for another year's planting is considered, it will be seen that the food supply in the Murdock home was indeed scanty. However, the supply, small as it was, was enjoyed with feelings of gratitude over the miraculous manner in which it had been obtained. It was the cricket year in the history of Utah. The Saints had watched their grain fields go down before the devouring pest and wondered what was to become of them. They had already an insufficient supply to last till harvest time. The Pioneers who reached the Valley in July, 1847, broke up some ground, did some planting, but of course, had no harvest. When, therefore, the crickets began to devour the crops, the Saints must have felt themselves doomed to starvation. There was nothing to support their

courage or to offer hope but that faith in God which they had learned to value in their strenuous experiences of the past. They never lost the conviction that they were God's people. Reliance on Him would bring them some relief they knew. How it would come they could not imagine. To them, it was a new, a queer experience. It is remarkable that in all their history in those early days no two experiences were alike, except, it may be said that reliance on God and his deliverance constituted an experience. In every case the circumstance was unlike everything that had gone before it. They had now a new manifestation of God's providence. Sea-gulls came in great swarms and devoured the crickets, and saved to them something like half a crop. It was a remarkable experience in the life of a people,—an experience which the men and women who went through it had to confirm their faith and treasure up as a beautiful remembrance in after life. It was one of the choice souvenirs in the life of John R. Murdock. He proudly adds his testimony to that of the others: "I wish to say that I experienced the cricket ravages on the crops of all kinds in this

Valley. The insects came in countless numbers. I witnessed the phenomenon of the gulls coming and destroying them. We all regarded this as very miraculous."

There was nothing spectacular in the experiences which followed the harvest of 1848. This scanty provision meant distress, and in the quietude of the home men and women were put to those severe tests that require fortitude and faith. It was that silent endurance which, after all, is the strongest test in the character of men and women. The story of how they lived has been told again and again. It is a grand story, even though a sad one. "We had to dig thistles and sego roots and every kind of weed that could be made into greens, and even this kind of food, too," he says "was very scarce. At this time father's family consisted of his son Gideon, his son George, and two adopted daughters." It was a large family for such a meagre supply, but they like others, bravely made the most of a trying situation, which was not at all new to the young man who had just undergone the ordeals of the Mormon Battalion.

The farm work of 1848 did not constitute

all the summer's labor of the subject of this sketch. Pres. Young was on his way from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake Valley. The Presidency of the Church had been organized on December 27th, 1847. It consisted of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards. These leaders started out from Elk Horn early in June of 1848. The first company, consisting of one hundred and twenty-nine souls and having three hundred and ninety-seven wagons, was led by Pres. Young; the second, with six hundred and sixty-two souls and two hundred and twenty-six wagons, by H. C. Kimball; the third, with five hundred and twenty-six souls and one hundred and sixty-nine wagons, by Willard Richards. Willard Richards had been detained by the misfortunes that overtook his company, but Pres. Young was closely followed by Heber C. Kimball and made good progress.

They needed aid, and competent young men were required to take fresh teams and go out to meet these companies whose arduous journey had told upon man and beast alike. These pioneers now enroute were made up of men, women, and children. In the selection of aid

for them, it is quite natural that John R. Murdock, whose experiences were so favorable and whose ability in such trying places had been thoroughly tested, should be called. He took his team, therefore, and under the Captaincy of Ira Eldredge went back with others to meet Pres. Young. They made roads through Parley's canyon and Park down Silver creek in order to intercept the other road at the mouth of Echo canyon. They came upon Pres. Young and company at the head of the Sweetwater, about three hundred miles from Salt Lake. They also met Pres. Kimball's company which was close in the rear.

John R. Murdock naturally felt some interest in the second company where he met his old time benefactor, Father Lott, and his daughter Almira, who was awaiting an opportunity to fulfil an engagement of matrimony. The two, therefore, had an opportunity to rehearse the strange and wonderful experiences they had both undergone since their parting in Iowa.

In those trying times, the renewed associations of old friends must have afforded a joy indescribable. Toil, anxiety, hardships, and

suffering created a brotherhood that those who have known naught else but prosperity could hardly understand, much less appreciate. There developed within those early pioneers a brotherly love, a friendship, a hospitality that was indeed beautiful; and the friendship of those early days left little opportunity for criticism and distrust. Those who remembered the deep friendships of Utah's pioneers, and the generous hospitality of those early days know something of the fruits of hardship which gave rise to such splendid results. The young man, with others of the relief party, loaded their teams from President Young's train and accompanied him into Salt Lake Valley, which they reached on the 20th of September, 1848.

The arrival of the First Presidency of the Church gave new life to the Saints in the Valley. On the 8th of October a general conference was held in the old Bowery which had been built in the Fort. The new Stake Presidency was organized, consisting of Charles C. Rich as president and John Young and Erastus Snow as counselors.

The new-comers neither had nor brought

with them sufficient food for the winter; and the fact that the crickets had destroyed one-half of the crop of the Saints that year made the outlook for the winter of 1848-9 a dreary one, indeed. The Saints, however, had taken all available means to provide every comfort possible, however meagre. The young man cut hay, hauled it, and supplied wood for the needs of his father's family, and late that year engaged himself to work for John P. Barnard, who had taken up a farm between what is now known as Centerville and Farmington. This farm had to be fenced, and young Murdock was sent to North Mill Creek to chop timber for that purpose during the winter.

That winter is well remembered by the earliest settlers as one of the severest in the history of Utah. Chopping timber, therefore, "waist deep in snow," as he says, was in no sense a comfortable occupation. The hardships of that winter was likewise one that tried his powers of endurance, but the young man kept faithfully at his post and after the farm work was finished his employer, Mr. Barnard, wished him to rent it from him. This John R. consented to do, and began at once to break up

the new ground. He was thorough in his work and therefore successful. He planted some wheat, a considerable amount of corn, and reaped a good harvest during the summer of 1849. This enabled him to supply himself and to assist his father.

John R. Murdock was also a witness of another of those remarkable interpositions in favor of the Latter-day Saints, which they have always regarded as divine. During the winter of 1848-9 the excessive cold and short rations naturally created a spirit of gloom. The Saints were in need of comfort and encouraging words to buoy them up in those days when they were so beset by misgivings as to their future ability to succeed in their newly chosen home. At one of the meetings at which the half-starved and poorly-clad Saints had gathered, Heber C. Kimball, in one of his prophetic outbursts, declared to the people that states' goods, food, and raiment to supply their needs would soon be sold in Salt Lake City cheaper than they were sold in St. Louis. How could such a thing be! Some of the leaders were openly skeptical over such remarks whose fulfillment was wholly beyond the comprehension

of the people. But the prophesy was fulfilled, as the eastern merchants had loaded large numbers of teams with merchandise which they were transporting to California in order to provide the miners there with merchandise. The excitement, however, became so strong when they reached Salt Lake City in the fall of 1849 that they abandoned their merchandise in order to reach the gold fields at the earliest possible moment. They sold merchandise and teams at whatever price they could get, and made any sacrifice necessary to get fresh animals. The story of this relief to the Saints is told in a few brief words by John R. Murdock: "For one good mule I received three yoke of good oxen and a new wagon. This provided me with a team so that I could go right on and make a home for my wife."

This unexpected supply of all sorts of merchandise—merchandise which, it must be remembered, was selected for the needs of the miners in California, was peculiarly helpful to the Saints. It set them up in house-keeping. The young man Murdock was, therefore, in circumstances favorable to the responsibilities of married life, which he entered into with

Miss Almira Lott, on the 12th day of November, 1849, at the Lott home, which stood on the corner now occupied by the Knutsford Hotel. The ceremony was performed by Heber C. Kimball. The new prosperity of that year made it possible to have a wedding supper and a good social pastime.

The city was extended in 1848, and all the land lying south of the Fort came rapidly under cultivation during the summer of 1849. A large field fence had been constructed so as to separate the farm lands near the mountains on the east from the pasture lands of the Jordan on the west. Young Murdock, some time after his marriage, moved to the old Church Farm, which is now known as Forest Dale. His early experiences in Missouri and Illinois and his success on the Barnard Farm naturally made him a desirable man for an important trust, and it was therefore quite natural that Father Lott should want him to assist in the development of this large and important farm.

Before, however, he entered upon his farm work south of the city, he was called to participate in one of those early Indian wars which the Saints of those early times had to

meet for the preservation of their stock and of their lives. John Higbee had led a number of the Saints to Provo. They crossed the Provo river and settled what was known in early times there, "the old Fort Field." During the winter of 1849-50 the Ute Indians made an attack upon these settlers, and he was called from his home at the old Church Farm to go to Provo that he might take part in the defense of the people there against the attacks of the Ute Indians, who had driven off a considerable number of stock and were constantly menacing the people.

General D. H. Wells was in command, and young Murdock belonged to the company of General Robert T. Burton. Soon after their arrival, there was some skirmishing with the Indians, and after an effort of a day or two to dislodge them, an order was made to capture a log house in the vicinity of where the Indians were located. This house was taken at considerable risk. A number of horses were shot, and two men were wounded on their advance upon it. Young Murdock's horse was shot through the neck and fell just as he reached the house. The ball missed the young

man's head by only a few inches, as he had just dismounted and was standing for a moment by his horse. After crawling into the house, which was done at considerable risk, they were fairly well protected. The firing was kept up for some time between the Indians and the men on the inside of the cabin. In this skirmish one man, Joseph Higbee, was killed, and several others were severely wounded. The men remained in the house until after dark, and then stole away to their camps. During the night, it is said, the Indians took some of the horses and went to the mountains. The men, however, followed them to Spanish Fork, where some of the Indians were overtaken and a number of them killed. This fight took place in February, 1850.

The gold excitement in California caused a constant stream of emigration through Salt Lake City to the Pacific coast during the summer of 1850. Those who reached the Valley somewhat late in the season were, of course, extremely anxious to hasten their journey and cross the Sierra Nevada before the cold set in. Here they desired to secure new outfits, for which they were ready to make almost any

exchange. John R. Mudock was instinctively a lover of good horses and cattle. His experiences with horses had made him not only skilful in the use of them, but a splendid judge of a good animal. He was, therefore, just the right kind of a man to avail himself of the excellent opportunities the emigrants afforded in horse trading. He knew not only the kind of animal the gold-seekers wanted, but his judgment indicated at once the most desirable animals they had to exchange. The fact was, in plain English, he was a good horse-trader. Of the summer of 1850 he says: "My means were limited, and this trading gave me a start in life by which I could take care of myself and family."

His stay at the Forest Dale farm was not of long duration. Father Lott died July, 1850, and was buried in what is known as the Salt Lake cemetery. His tombstone of native red sandstone was the first erected in that City of the Dead. "Father Lott," as he was familiarly known in his family, was a man who evidently enjoyed the confidence of the Church leaders, as he was trusted both by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young with their leading farming

operations. In December, 1850, young Murdock left the farm and lived some time with his wife's family at their home on the Knutsford corner. This left him somewhat at sea, and he therefore began to look around for some place where he might cast his lot and make a home. His lot had been cast a great many times, and his feelings respecting the permanency of home could not have been very strong, in view of the rapid and radical changes that came to his life from the days of his infancy. Thus far he had been trained in the school of emergencies and was always ready at a moment's notice to respond to duty's call.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY LIFE IN LEHI

"Early in the spring of 1851," says John R. Murdock, "I took my family and household effects and moved to Lehi and commenced work on what was really my first home. In 1850 my father went on a mission to Australia, and was gone over three years. It was the opening of a mission in that country. He went as far as California with an ox-team, with Rich and Lyman's companies of emigrants. I helped take care of his family during his absence."

During the fall of 1850 there was a general movement for the colonization of the leading towns of Utah Valley. The location of these towns was governed by the streams of water which flowed from the mountains. This movement was, of course, attracting the attention of those who needed, and were therefore seeking, new homes. The choice lands immediately south of Salt Lake City had been generally selected, and the farms in the Salt Lake Valley by this time were growing so in value that

men without means could not purchase them. Young Murdock, with two of his brothers-in-law therefore set out for Lehi, which at that time was perhaps not so attractive as some of the other settlements, because of its meager supply of water. However, young Murdock there secured forty acres of land, which he commenced at once to cultivate.

"The first work on my farm in Lehi was to take the water from Srping Creek by means of a ditch and dam. I then began to break up the new land and to put in a crop. I built a log house down by Utah Lake, together with other settlers. Later we took out a canal from American Fork canyon and brought water across the bench. This was at that time, perhaps, the most extensive canal work that had been made. The undertaking was considerable because of the distance over which the water had to be taken, but the soil in and about Lehi was rich and, therefore, inviting." "From the first," he says, "there was a continual stream of new settlers pouring into Lehi, and as time went on, the Indians became very troublesome to the people. We all had to move into a square fort and guard our stock night and day

against their encroachments. Some time after this we incorporated as a city. In a most unexpected and rather singular manner I became one of the first mayors of Lehi City. It came about in this way. As it usually happens, there are two parties concerned in the election of city officers. The party in power took what I regarded as rather an improper course, and I arose in the meeting and undertook to vindicate the weaker party, with no thought whatever of its resulting in my election as mayor, and without any effort on my part. However, it seemed that I was the choice of the people."

John Murdock was naturally a leader among men. He had strong convictions, and better still, he always had the courage to express them. His experience and superior judgment naturally gave him a pre-eminence among his fellow men. It was not at all strange that he should be elected one of the first mayors of Lehi City.

During the early days of his residence there, the Indian troubles came to the people of Lehi. Their homes and cattle were valuable in those times, and perhaps the principal source of ready money. As the thieving propensities of

the Indians manifested themselves, protective measures had to be adopted. Of these times he says: "The Indians again became very troublesome at the south end of the lake, and we sent a party of men to gather up the stock on that range which belonged to our people. They had succeeded in collecting the stock and stopped to eat their supper, when the Indians suddenly came upon them and killed three of their men, Cousins, Catlin, and George Winn. A continual watch had to be kept. We put the cattle in corrals at night. I had charge of them until the Indian troubles were over."

Speaking of his early experiences of those times he recounts his Indian mission to Southern Utah, with some twenty others, known as Parley's company. The purpose of this mission was to establish friendly relations with the red men and to teach them the art of farming. The company broke up new land and taught the Indians how to plant and cultivate. Quite a number of them were baptized. This mission continued over a period of four or five months. Later, he went on a similar mission to the one in Southern Utah, among the French and Indian tribes at Green River, and at Pa-

cific Springs. Here, they met some success in their efforts, and he returned from that mission with his brother-in-law, John Lott, to Lehi, where he continued to labor on his farm until 1856.

In the fall of 1856 John R. Murdock, who was now thirty years old, went with a relief party to assist the hand-cart company in its struggles to reach the valleys during the severe cold weather of that season. The company was in a precarious condition, and grave fears were entertained that the hand-cart people might perish. It was a time of intense anxiety, and men everywhere responded, not only with willingness, but with anxiety, to the call. "Our party," he says, "met the emigrants near Fort Bridger. It began to snow on us in Echo canyon and did not cease until the snow was three feet deep on the low grounds and on the Big Mountain it was at a depth of ten feet, largely through drifting. In getting over the Big Mountain, I consider that I had performed the big feat of my life. The train, consisting of about seventy-five wagons, had been ploughing in the deep snow all day. I went ahead on horseback, leaving

the rest of the relief party behind. It was very difficult, but I managed to struggle through the snow to the top of the Big Mountain. I was quite alone, but here met two men, with six yoke of oxen, who had come up on the west side of the mountain. They had come from Provo to assist the hand-cart company.

When I told them their teams were needed at the farthest end of the train, they said they would go back to their camp and remain until the next day. I said no, and told them that if they would do as I said we would get the whole train over that night. I took full charge of all; for I realized that many of the people would perish if left on the mountain that night. My plan was to take the oxen and hitch on to the first two wagons and pull them through the snow, and thus open the road and enable the whole train to pass through. My advice was followed, and we succeeded in getting the entire train over by ten o'clock at night. The company then passed on quickly to a camp ground, where there was plenty of firewood prepared by the men who had been left behind. When the train had passed through, the cut in the snow bank was ten feet

deep. You could lay a pole across the chasm and a covered wagon could easily pass under it. The next day we went into Salt Lake City, where the snow was about three feet deep. After seeing the company safely in the Valley, I returned to my home in Lehi."

"In 1857 President Young called me to join the Y. X. Co., an abbreviation for Brigham Young Express Company, to carry the mail from Salt Lake to Missouri, a distance of twelve hundred miles." "This," he says, "was Hyrum Kimball's contract. I accepted the call and accordingly took my mules to drive. Porter Rockwell was in charge of the company, which consisted of about ten men. Horace Eldredge and N. Groesbeck, who were going east on business, accompanied us.

"We left Salt Lake City on the first day of March, 1857. Travel was so difficult and the snow so deep that it took us eleven days to get with our pack mules to Fort Bridger, a distance of only one hundred and fifteen miles. Not wishing to follow further the old emigrant road, we took from there a new route across the country by what is known as the Bitter Creek route, toward Devil's Gate on the Sweet-

water. We had a great deal of difficulty in getting through the country, and there is one special incident of this journey that I must speak of. We were on the lookout for game, especially buffalo, when we came suddenly on a herd of five. Porter Rockwell and Crawford went out and got a shot at them and wounded one, and as it was near night we went into camp.

"Crawford remarked to me: 'We can get that wounded buffalo, if you are the kind of a man I think you are.' We struck out with a mule apiece, without having had anything to eat since early morning. We took the trail of the buffalo, and as there was snow on the ground the tracks were rapidly and easily followed. We pursued the buffalo until it was almost dark, before we finally overtook them. We were at least fifteen miles from camp, and attempted to return, but the country was so uneven and rough that we lost our road and finally were compelled to stop, for our mules were tired out and we were also. The night we spent there was most terrible. The wind blew dreadfully, and there was one of the most terrible northwest storms I was ever in. We

could get no wood anywhere except on a high knoll. There we found some green sage brush, which we had to pull up by the roots, to make a fire of, and we struck the last one of eleven matches which we had to kindle the fire. The exercise of pulling up the green brush was perhaps what kept us from freezing to death, for we hadn't a blanket nor a bite to eat. Our mules came nearly freezing with their saddles on, it was so terribly cold. We were a happy pair of men to see daylight again, so that we could find our way to camp. We were met by a party of men who had set out to find us, fearing, almost expecting, to find us frozen to death."

After leaving this place, the company made its way on to Devil's Gate without further delay or difficulties. There they found a French trading post, where the hand-cart company, the year before, had left a large amount of their luggage, which Daniel W. Jones and Benjamin Hampton were delegated to take charge of until it could be removed to Utah. After reaching the regular course of the journey, Fort Laramie, Porter Rockwell remained at that post and the company then fell under the direc-

tion of N. Groesbeck. On leaving Fort Laramie the most direct route to Independence was taken, and though the country was not so rough and uneven as that over which they passed, and the climate very much more agreeable, this latter part of the journey was made extremely difficult from the fact that the men had to walk most all the way in consequence of the poor condition of their animals. At that season of the year they, of course, found no grass except that which was dry and not very nourishing. The company reached Independence the 26th of April, almost two months from the time they left Salt Lake City.

Independence at this time was not only nearer to the City of Washington, but it was on a direct line from St. Louis, which was then the chief commercial city of the West. Railroads had not then superseded water traffic of the Mississippi, and consequently the boats coming up that river from New Orleans made it not only the most available point for landing merchandise, but the Saints who were now arriving in large numbers from Europe also came by way of New Orleans to St. Louis, and thence on to Independence. Here, the

mail was brought not only from the Eastern States, but also from Europe. After procuring an outfit at Independence consisting of light vehicles, mules, and horses, John R. Murdock set out upon his return for Utah on the first day of May with the United States mail, and George A. Smith, Doctor Bernhisel, Truman O. Angell, a young man, and two West Indian planters, as passengers.

The return journey was more quickly accomplished because of the favorable season of the year. There was more grass for the animals and the roads were in better condition. When out about three hundred miles they lost three of their best mules which, however, they subsequently found. Although this loss of the animals hindered them somewhat, they still kept steadily going and made good time. The route from Independence brought them to the South Platte, which at this season of the year they found some difficulty in crossing. "All the passengers," he says, "except the doctor, had to wade the river, which was as much as a mile and a half across, and was full of mud and ice. Though the stream was shallow there were numerous holes in its bed which was consti-

tuted largely of quicksand. I waded out into it several rods, but the water was so cold it took my breath. I therefore returned to the shore at once. All the men, including Brother George A. Smith, worked hard and faithfully in getting the wagons across. The two West Indian planters, however, concluded that they would prefer to ride the loose mules; so I caught two, and after they had mounted them and got out into the stream, perhaps one third of the way across, one of the mules plunged into one of the deep holes and fell. The planter went down with him, and while in the water lost some of his money and a pistol, which he carried in his pocket. He turned his mule loose and got over the best he could. The other planter went a little farther and met a similar experience. He lost his knife and other articles which he carried in his pockets. When they reached the other side of the river they looked like drowned rats. When we all succeeded in getting over the Platte we made a fire and dried our clothing."

"From the river the party continued its travels without further incident to Fort Laramie. At Horse Shoe, a little stream above Fort Lar-

amie, they met a party of fifty missionaries, who were traveling with hand-carts and were on their way from Utah to their mission fields in the East. Continuing on their journey they reached Salt Lake City the last of May, having covered the distance in about one month.

After remaining at home in Lehi with his family for one month, John R. Murdock was called to make a second trip with the mail and express from Salt Lake City to Independence. There were special reasons why his services were particularly sought after at this time by President Young. The Overland Mail service between the East and the Pacific Coast had been very unsatisfactory. The mails were long delayed in transit, and passenger accommodations were meagre, and the people of Utah were greatly dissatisfied over the contemptuous neglect to which they were subjected. Government contractors had no special desire to cater either to the wishes or comforts of the Mormons. When, therefore, the time came to bid for the transportation of the mail, Hockaday and McGraw were underbid by Hyrum Kimball, who took over the government con-

tract which was organized into a company, briefly styled the Y. X. Company.

The Mormons were, of course, ambitious to reform the service by making it expeditious, safe and as comfortable as the circumstances of those times would permit. Men were therefore needed whose judgment, courage, prudence, and skill could be relied upon. Brigham Young had a large acquaintance with the men who had proven themselves throughout the trying times of Missouri and Nauvoo. Here was a man who had such a test, who had been a member of the Mormon Battalion, who was a minute man, who was quick to size up a situation and make the best of it. Such men were not easy to find, and it is not therefore to be wondered at that John R. Murdock, during those early days, and subsequently during the emigration period in which practical men were required, should be frequently called upon. Murdock always had the happy faculty of doing things—doing them in the right way and at the right time.

The eyes of jealous contractors were upon this company. Its conduct would be carefully watched; every failure would be noted,

criticised, and of course, reported to Washington. There must be no failures. President Young and the leaders must demonstrate to the officials at Washington that they could discharge this new trust with promptness and ability, that the new service which they were to render was to be in every way superior to the service of those whom the new company had superseded. Men called to this work had a record to make, not only for themselves but for the reputation of the Mormon people.

"We left Salt Lake City," says John R. Murdock, "about the first day of July, 1857, carrying with us United States mail. There were three vehicles and six men in the party. John Kerr, an agent for Kincaid & Bell, the successors of Livingstone & Bell, merchants, also traveled with us. He had with him a large amount of money, about sixty thousand dollars. I also had about thirteen thousand dollars in Church drafts. We felt, naturally, the great responsibility placed upon us. In fifteen days we covered the entire distance of twelve hundred miles from Salt Lake City to Independence, Missouri. Our stock was fed on grass only, but this was good all along the

road. Our method of traveling was as follows: We arose at daylight, hitched up and traveled twenty miles, then stopped for breakfast and rested an hour or two while our stock fed and watered. We then traveled twenty miles and made another stop. In the afternoon we made a like drive and stopped for supper, after which we made a fourth drive into the night, thus making an average of eighty miles' travel each day, for fifteen days."

That was certainly a marvelous record, and it is very doubtful whether it has a parallel in all the history of western pioneer life. Those who know something of the capacity of horses and mules will appreciate the difficulty of covering so great distance in so short a time. Such persons would naturally ask, "How could he do it?" Those who know the man, in the first place, know that he is a lover of fine horses, and that he has always taken great pride in driving a beautiful team. His experience from his earliest boyhood taught him the capacity of horses, mules, and oxen. He had learned how to treat them; and what was perhaps of greater value to him, was his love and sympathy for animals, which naturally respond

to a friendship which they instinctively feel, and that response is always the best there is in them. John R. Murdock was always proud of that record.

Speaking of what he considered as a providential escape on this second journey, he says: "Thirty-five miles above Grand Island on the Platte river we stopped for supper and then proceeded a short distance, when we saw a large body of horsemen on the road, coming toward us. At first we thought they were government troops, as the Johnston Army was then moving toward Utah; but as it advanced, we discovered that they were a war party of Cheyenne Indians, about forty in number, and heavily armed with guns, spears, bows and arrows. This tribe of Indians was very turbulent and savage and very hostile to the whites at this time. As it afterwards proved, the band was out for booty, and was ready to commit any depredation. Our vehicles were covered, and we had a few loose animals which we were driving to stock the road. 'Boys,' I said, 'we must act wisely or we may get into trouble. We must not stop and let them discover our strength.' There were only seven of us in the

party. The fact that we had loose horses indicated to the Indians that there must be a number of men inside our vehicles, and this was confirmed by Mr. Kerr, who, in recapping a double-barrel shotgun, discharged it, the shot passing through the cover. By this time the Indians were within two or three hundred yards of us. They stopped suddenly and insisted that we also should stop. I told the boys not to do this, but to go on as fast as possible, and I would remain and talk with the Indians. I had an armful of tobacco which I had brought to use in an emergency, knowing the fondness of the Indians for this article. I went up to them and asked for the chief. He was pointed out to me. I gave him the tobacco and told him to distribute it among his men. I had ridden a little ahead of our party, and while I was talking to the Indians and insisting that they should let us pass on, our boys drove by them as fast as they could, without any interruption. After we passed, the Indians appeared to hold a consultation, but they evidently decided to give us no further trouble, and we passed quickly on to Fort Kearney. From that place, a distance of thirty-five miles,

we traveled without a pause, as we feared they would surprise us by an attack if we went into camp before reaching the Fort. Such would certainly have happened had we stopped and permitted them to see how weak we were in numbers. Besides, we had just what they wanted, about thirty head of good horses and a large amount of money in gold and silver. This same band of Indians, about a week later attacked eighteen men who were driving a government beef herd on their way to Utah. A fight took place near the Platte river. Two men were killed and the Indians got away with all the cattle."

The money they carried with them was in Mr. Kerr's charge, but Murdock assisted him in protecting it, and later in carrying it to the bank in St. Louis, whither he went to do some business with H. S. Eldredge, the Church agent there.

From Fort Kearney the rest of the journey was made to Independence without any further adventures. There, the United States mail was delivered into the custody of the proper officers; but this was the last mail carried by our people for the government in those early times.

Orders had been sent on from Washington to Independence to the effect that mail directed to Utah must be withheld.

The army was now on its way to Utah, and the whole situation was changed. The mail contract terminated abruptly, and John R. Murdock was again subjected to another of those dangerous uncertainties which had frequently fallen to his lot from his earliest recollection. He had learned, however, that new dangers meant new activities, and that he must turn his hand to whatever lay before him to do. He was always resourceful, and had no difficulty in adjusting himself to new and unusual tasks. Now that his services for the government were ended he went on to St. Louis and from there made his way to Atchison, on the Missouri river. Here, he loaded a mule and horse train with merchandise for Bell & Kincaid of Salt Lake City. On the return journey there was much excitement along the road in view of the attitude of the United States government toward the Mormon people. He had been, however, under fire before, and was equal to the dangers and troubles ahead.

From Atchison he traveled with several de-

tachments of the United States army on its way to Utah. He therefore understood what was going on, and from the soldiers learned something of what they intended to do upon reaching Salt Lake City. It was the old story of Mormon persecution—a story he knew by heart. He was not dismayed, for he had learned to trust to the providences of God. On reaching Devil's Gate, he met Gen. Burton and his forces. There, a new and important duty came to him. It was necessary to forward an express from General Burton's camp to President Young in Salt Lake City. "My errand," he says, "was very urgent. I rode day and night, and with a change of horses covered the distance in four days—a distance of three hundred and forty miles." He knew how to ride a horse as well as how to drive it. Such a ride must certainly have taxed his energies very greatly. Though it was not famous in poetry or in song, it was nevertheless a great feat—a record not elsewhere easily found.

He reached Salt Lake City on the last day of September, and after delivering his message repaired at once to his home in Lehi. After such a strenuous life and such remark-

able endurance, he naturally found some relief in the quiet and comfort of a home; but one of his children died soon after his arrival, so that a journey of remarkable endurance had its closing scene in the sorrows of death.

CHAPTER VII

LIFE ON THE PLAINS

The winter of 1857-58 was one full of anxieties to the Latter-day Saints, who were face to face with conditions that might result in another exodus. Preparations were under way for the abandonment of homes, and perhaps another exodus was before the people. John R. Murdock must have felt in those days that the lot of a Latter-day Saint was that of a wanderer. But no man in the Church was better prepared for just such emergencies as confronted the people than he was, since he had been inured to them from his infancy. Speaking of that winter, he said: "I remained at home, attending to my private affairs." He had no private affairs that might not be interrupted; he had no personal interest that he would not gladly surrender to the interests of the Church. He knew what was going on at the frontier. He understood the movement of the army which was then advancing upon Utah. He had been intrusted with important

work, which he had accomplished in a most satisfactory manner.

During the trying hours of a threatened invasion of Utah, President Young remembered the kind-hearted man and a loyal friend, Thomas L. Kane, who had visited the Saints while they were exiled on the banks of the Missouri River. His home was in Philadelphia, and President Young had assurance of the kindly feelings of Colonel Kane for the Mormon people. Samuel Richards was therefore sent to ask the kind-hearted Colonel to intercede in behalf of Utah, and to bring to the knowledge of the President the untruthful reports upon which the army had been sent. Although Col. Kane was then in poor health, he at once undertook the mission of a peace-maker. He proceeded at once to Washington, where he interviewed the President and obtained from him a commission to visit the scenes of trouble and promote peace and a proper understanding between the Mormons and the government. Colonel Kane set out at once from New York to the Pacific Coast by steamer and by the Isthmus. He reached Salt Lake City on the 25th of February, 1858, and after a hurried consul-

tation with the authorities made his way to Fort Bridger, where he held interviews with the newly-appointed governor, Mr. Cumming. He found the hostility against the Mormons very great, and General Johnson was bitterly opposed to Colonel Kane's mission. Indeed, at one time an open conflict between the two seemed almost inevitable.

Colonel Kane returned with Governor Cumming to Salt Lake City, which they reached on the 12th day of April. After the way had been paved for an amicable adjustment between the newly appointed governor and the Mormon people, and prospects of settling the troubles were in sight, Colonel Kane set out upon his return to the East across the plains. The hostility of General Johnson to Colonel Kane was known to Brigham Young, and he was therefore extremely anxious that their warm-hearted friend, the colonel, might be conveyed across the plains without danger and as expeditiously and comfortably as possible. President Young therefore selected a special escort of men whose proven courage, wisdom, and loyalty could be depended upon. He therefore appointed for Colonel Kane a tried and proven

escort of five men, under the direction of Howard Egan. John R. Murdock was made a member of that escort. Governor Cumming went with them as far as Fort Bridger.

Speaking of that mission, John R. Murdock says: "We started about the first of May, 1858. When we arrived at Fort Bridger, we found the most hostile feelings against us, and against everything concerning the welfare of the Mormons. We remained a few hours at the Fort and then proceeded on our journey. We met several government supply teams, and those who accompanied them were also very hostile. Nothing of any note on the way transpired. We made the whole trip, a distance of one thousand and sixty miles, in twenty-two days, and without a change of animals."

That, too, was a remarkable journey at that early season of the year when feed through the mountains was insufficient and when it is remembered that they were crossing a country whose feed had been quite thoroughly exhausted by the government animals. Upon reaching the Missouri river, Howard Egan went on with Colonel Kane to Washington that he might bring back with him to Utah any com-

munication which the President of the United State desired to send to Governor Cumming or to General Johnston. Egan's absence on this journey caused a delay of the rest of the escort at Florence for about six weeks.

At the end of that period the escort returned to Fort Bridger, making as good time on the return trip as they had made going East. Egan had brought with him important documents from Washington to President Young. It was necessary that they be forwarded to Salt Lake City at the earliest possible moment. The distance from Fort Bridger was one hundred and fifteen miles, and to John R. Murdock was committed the duty of conveying this important document with speed and without delay. He covered the distance of one hundred and fifteen miles in twenty-four hours.

"I rode," he says, "the same horse, Painter, that I had ridden during the whole trip to Omaha and back." Some of these rides of John R. Murdock will go into history in days to come with the celebrated rides that are characterized in the poetry of our national heroism. They are so remarkable as to appear almost incredible when compared with the pres-

ent endurance of both man and beast. That faithful horse, Painter, will hold his place, too, in the honorable mention of great deeds. No wonder his rider holds his name in loving remembrance, and mentions him with pride when recounting his early experiences in Utah.

"I went home to Lehi and worked at private business until the year 1861." That was a very modest account to give of himself after so important a mission. In these simple words there was no ostentation, no self-glory. It was a duty well performed. It was a mission of high honor. It was a part of a great history in the lives of a great people. It was one of those events that time alone could magnify and give its true setting in the fame it was to bring to the life of a man who did his duty humbly as he did it well. He had reason, however, to feel grateful; a child had been born to him in his absence.

Soon after his return, the army came to Utah and made its encampment not far from Lehi, at a place known as Camp Floyd. The encampment of the army, and the presence of a large number of camp-followers gave enlarged opportunities to the people in the vicinity of the

camp and Salt Lake City to speculate and advance their material interests. John R. Murdock's favorable location at Lehi and his inherent genius to avail himself of such opportunities was not, however, to be gratified. The faithful discharge of one duty made him all the more desirable for new and enlarged responsibilities.

"In the year 1861 I was called," he says, "to take charge of a Church train consisting of fifty wagons and as many drivers. There were four yoke of oxen to each wagon. It was our mission to go down to the Missouri river and bring emigrants to Utah. After making our preparations, we started about the first of May, 1861. Grass was short, consequently we had to use great care in providing suitable food for our teams, and to drive prudently until the grass improved. Before leaving Salt Lake City we loaded up with flour and other provisions to meet the needs of the emigrants with whom we were to return. These supplies we deposited at certain points along the road, so that we could use them on our return.

"It generally took about nine weeks to cross the plains, and though it was a laborious trip,

we had a great deal of enjoyment out of it. We had musicians with their instruments and would sometimes have what the boys called 'stag dances,' as there were no ladies with us on the 'down' trip. There were always several trains on the road which frequently camped close to ours, so the drivers often mingled with each other and engaged in such contests as wrestling, racing, and jumping. I took a great deal of pleasure in such association with the boys."

These trains were generally made up from different sections of the territory, and there would naturally be some feelings of rivalry among them. As these rivalries took on the form of honorable contests, they naturally gave rise to sympathies and friendships that lasted throughout life. How often in after years men were wont to say, when introduced to a supposed stranger. Yes, I knew him. We were old friends together on the plains." To know each other on the plains was the badge of friendship and the assurance of hospitality. How these old-time friends were men and women who underwent trials together and rejoiced in lasting friendships, those of later

generations can hardly realize. There is an old adage which says: "If you would know a man you must first travel with him."

How unlike, however, were the Mormon travelers on the plains in those early days when compared with other travelers! The latter were quite contentious from the familiarity of their associations with their fellow men. Their companies were frequently broken up, hatreds were engendered, and sometimes men fought to the death. On the other hand, the Mormons were men and women of religious convictions, who deeply sensed their obligations and desired to live in harmony with their fellow men. They were under the watch-care of God and were taught unity and brotherly love by humbly submitting themselves to the direction of a kind Providence, both morning and night, in an attitude of prayer. They were taught to feel the need of divine protection, and the approbation of their God. How could they have, then, they asked themselves, these blessings, if in their midst there were not brotherly love and a willingness to make sacrifice for the good and happiness of others. The relationship of these Mormon emigrants

was both, instructive and joyful. What, therefore, John R. Murdock has to say of those days on the plains is full of interest. He gives us some insight into a life far from anything that we have ever experienced, but into a life that had much to do in laying the foundations of that faith, love, and friendship that characterized the beginning of the Church in the early history of Utah.

“Our first trip down,” he says, “was without any particular incident. We remained at the river a short time and then loaded the luggage of the emigrants into our wagons. There were from sixteen to twenty persons, men, women, and children, assigned to each wagon. Those who were old enough to walk were expected to do so the greater part of the way. They would ride, occasionally, when the roads were good. I always appointed two men whose duty it was to look after the passengers. It was certainly novel to see a train starting out with everything that could be put into wagons and everything that could be tied to the outside, such as buckets, cans and all kinds of cooking utensils. It reminded one of an old turkey with a brood of young ones

keeping her company. Generally there were about seven hundred passengers in one train. The organization was systematic and complete. It consisted of a captain, an assistant, a chaplain, a quarter-master, hospital steward, a camp guard, and a night guard for the stock. The chaplain took charge of the religious services, and we had prayer night and morning. We also had a choir with its leader. The people were called together by means of a bugle."

This description applies to all the companies, which required about nine weeks going and coming. The experiences of the emigrants were educational as well as fraternal. Frequently the teamsters, who were usually unmarried men, formed attachments for the young ladies among the emigrants. These attachments resulted in life-long friendships, and sometimes in matrimony.

On reaching home from his trip across the plains in 1861, he returned to Lehi to pass the winter of 1861 and 62. This gave him no opportunity to till his fields and harvest his crop. His stay at home was at a season of the year in which it was most difficult to provide means

of sustenance for his family. John R. Murdock was a thoughtful man—a man who could foresee possible dangers and was therefore constantly on his guard to escape troubles that foresight and prudence might protect him from. There is seen in his narratives of those early experiences a deep-seated satisfaction which he felt in the fact that he and those in his charge escaped accidents and avoided both danger and trouble. The personal conquests of his life were the conquests of peace. He put great store upon timely prudence, which was a protection to himself and others; and although he was pre-eminently helpful in assisting others out of difficulty, he found greater satisfaction in keeping them from it. He had, therefore, a right to speak of that particular satisfaction which he felt in the fact that he had lost few passengers among all those whom he had helped across the plains.

The spring of 1862 brought to him another call. It might seem hard to draft him again into a service to which he had devoted so much of his life. Why not let others try their hand? It was not, however, work upon which to make experiments. The lives, as well as the comfort

and happiness of thousands, depended upon the skill and efficiency with which the emigration trains of those days were conducted. Men, tried and true, must bear the responsibility. Moral questions were involved, and men of known moral character were needed.

John R. Murdock responded again to a call in the spring of 1862. Of that year he says: "The season was very different from that of the year before. It was exceedingly wet, and every little stream was filled from the melting snows. At Yellow Creek, about seventy miles from Salt Lake City, we were a whole day crossing a little stream not more than twenty feet wide. All the low country near this stream was covered with water waist deep. All that day we struggled in getting our train over a small bridge. While we were at work, a man with his family came along and asked to cross our bridge. His request was granted. He felt so grateful about it that he handed out to me a keg of whisky and asked me to have a drink. Of course I could not regard what he intended to be a treat as something I could accept as a personal favor. I told him that when I drank all the boys must have the same

privilege. He told us to take it all. Having wallowed in mud and water for ten hours that day, without very much to eat, we accepted the liquor as a stimulant, especially as we still had ten wagons to get across; and by the aid of the stimulant we were enabled to bring them all over that night. When we reached Ham's Fork we found the entire bottom-lands covered for a distance of one-half mile with water, which was six feet deep in some places. I succeeded in getting my train across in two days, but some of the other trains were three weeks in getting over."

Owing to the wet season and the consequent high waters, his train that year was very greatly delayed. He reached Winter Quarters about the middle of July. There, he met for the first time Mary Ellen Wolfenden and her mother's family, which consisted of two daughters and two grandchildren. Subsequently Mary Ellen became his wife. While East, during this trip, he visited his sister Julia, who had married a man by the name of Dixon, with whom she went to Texas, where he was killed in a steamboat explosion. She afterwards married John Middleton with whom she was living when he

found her at St. Louis. The visit was a source of pleasure to both of them.

"I went," he says, "by way of Nauvoo to see Sister Emma Smith and her family and to visit the city where I had lived in former times." During the years that he had been in the employ of Joseph Smith on his farm he became naturally associated more or less intimately with the Prophet and his family. Besides, Joseph and Emma Smith had been the foster parents of his twin sister and brother, whose love and kindness for the little ones he had never forgotten. That visit and the joyful meeting that he had with his sister whom he had not seen for eighteen years made the trip of 1862 both pleasurable and remarkable to him. On his return from these visits, he took command of his train and reached Salt Lake City early in the month of October. During his absence, another child was born to him, a circumstance which almost resulted in the death of the mother.

"In January, 1863," he says, "I was married on the same day to Mary Ellen Wolfenden and May Bain. The ceremony was performed by

Daniel H. Wells in the Endowment House at Salt Lake City."

It must have seemed to John R. Murdock in those early days that his life was to be devoted wholly to the service of others. For the most part, his home consisted largely of a wagon-box, and perhaps most of the time he was crowded even out of that, and forced to take shelter beneath it and between the wheels, that is, when he was not required to give up such a shelter for the comfort of others.

The spring of 1863 brought another call, and, with the same fidelity that had characterized his devotion to the Church, he responded with promptness. It is a pleasing tribute to the life and character of John R. Murdock to say that, as he recounts the experiences and incidents of those trying times, he never once speaks of a hardship or a sacrifice. What he remembers about that time, and that about which he takes the greatest pride is that he was able to do it. His experiences, his emigration training of 1863, are worthy of quotation at some length. They reveal the ambitions of the man and show how well he loved to excel in

action; for John R. Murdock was more eminently a man of deeds than of words.

Recounting the experiences of 1863, he says: "There were ten Church trains of fifty wagons each. Among the men called to act as captains was W. B. Preston. I was partial to him then, and have always been since. He was a little ambitious, and I was ambitious also. He remarked to Bishop Hunter, who had general charge of the emigration, that he was going to lead all the other trains down and back again. Bishop Hunter knew what I had done in past seasons, and was very much pleased with what he considered my success in handling teams and in helping emigrants. He was, perhaps, a little partial to me and so he told me when I met him at the mouth of Echo Canyon what W. B. Preston had said to him, Brother Preston being already three days ahead of me with his teams. Bishop Hunter, perhaps, meant by his words to give me both a warning and a challenge. He evidently did not want me 'beaten.'

"I overtook Brother Preston after we had traveled about three hundred miles. After that I was sometimes ahead and sometimes he

would be in the lead. However, I had resolved in my mind to outgeneral him and to do it honorably and without injury to our teams. When we made our last deposit of supplies at Wood River, about one hundred and seventy miles this side of Florence, I saw that he intended to make good his word; and I should, perhaps, have allowed him to go in ahead of me without any particular exertion on my part to prevent it, had it not been for what he said to Bishop Hunter. Brother Preston made longer marches than usual and arrived first at Loup Fork, a branch of the Platte River. There we had to cross by ferry. I planned to pass him at that point by crossing the river first. I did it in this way: When my train reached the river, he had all his across the ferry except twelve wagons. The river was low. Upon making necessary inquiries, I found that by taking a certain direction in the river below the ferry down to a given point on an island and then turning at a certain angle up the river, I could reach a landing on the other side near a Cottonwood tree. Before starting, however, I rode up to the ferryman to make some inquiries. Some of Preston's men jokingly re-

marked that they thought they had lost me. In reply I told them I thought I was good for the home stretch. They then had no idea what my plans were.

"I called the ferryman aside and asked him if there were not a contract between him and Mr. Little, who was then a Church agent, that the crossing of the river ferry both going and coming would be at the rate of one dollar for each wagon. He replied that there was, and that it would be just the same for my train whether I ferried or not. I said, 'all right,' and then took to the river. My whole train crossed without any trouble, incident or accident. When we were all over, Brother Preston had still ten wagons to ferry across, and he saw that I had out-generaled him. We were then about eighty miles from Florence, and the important thing was to keep ahead. Being well acquainted with the road and watering places, I took advantage of suitable camp grounds. The first night Brother Preston was behind us, as I thought he should be.

"Here I wish to say that it is my belief that I made the best time with ox-teams that was ever made on this continent under similar cir-

cumstances. It was in the long days of June and the weather was not excessively hot. Our oxen were well 'seasoned' and in good condition to travel. We made forty miles the second day from Loup Fork. That brought us to Elk Horn, twenty miles from Florence. There were at one time fifty men living who could confirm the truth of the above statement, and there are some now living who will remember this record.

"We reached Florence a half a day in advance of Preston's train. On our arrival we found ready for emigration about seven hundred Saints, a ship load of emigrants. That number was sufficient to load my train, which was consequently loaded at once. This caused Brother Preston a delay of five weeks, as he had to wait for the next ship load before he could leave with his train."

This circumstance related by him is given at considerable length, as it shows the inherent disposition of the man to excel in whatever he undertook. The fact that he arrived in Salt Lake City weeks ahead of his old-time friend, W. B. Preston, was something that always enlivened his spirit in after life whenever the

pleasantries of those days were talked over. Bishop Hunter also must have had faith in John R. Murdock when he warned him that he would have a strong competitor in the field for honors among the emigrant trains of that season. No doubt Bishop Hunter felt some satisfaction when the man who enjoyed both his love and his confidence made good the expectations which the venerable Bishop had for him.

His home coming that year was not without its sadness, for he not only found his wife in delicate health, but his son Orrice died not long after his return. The spring of 1864, like clock work, brought with it a new summons to an old service. This time he was called to take a mule and horse train across the plains to the Missouri River. In this train there were about seventy-five wagons, some of which were private conveyances that were taking President D. H. Wells and Brigham Young, Jr., with their families, to the mission field in England. The journey was made without any incidents worthy of special mention.

Of that trip he says: "The south fork of the Platte was high, and we had a

dreadful time in crossing it. We reached the Missouri river, about six miles above Nebraska City. On reaching that city we made our purchases and loaded up with freight and emigrants. We remained at Nebraska City about ten days and then commenced our journey for Salt Lake City. The first night out, our horses stampeded and scattered all over the country. It took us four days to find them and get them together again. After that we were frequently threatened with a repetition of a similar experience. We consequently had to keep men mounted all the time to prevent another stampede.

"One who has never seen animals stampede can scarcely understand the nature of it, nor how impossible it is to stop a stampede when once it begins. The horses and mules would all be scattered over quite an area of ground quietly feeding and at any little noise they would all jump together and away they would go like a flash. We continued our journey, and at the south fork of the Platte we were overtaken by two families. One was that of Judge Gilchrist. They had made forced marches to reach us and to travel in our company to Utah.

On our way home I was met at the mouth of Echo canyon by my devoted wife Almira. Upon reaching Salt Lake City and unloading my train, I returned with her to Lehi."

Speaking of these "emigrant days," John R. Murdock says, more in a spirit of satisfaction than in boasting: "I think I am safe in saying that I brought more emigrants to Utah than did any other one man. I was also most successful with my teams and lost but very few."

He may easily be excused for entertaining a feeling of pride over such a record. Those days of emigration responsibilities characterized John R. Murdock as a man of affairs—a man fitted by nature and experience for a great variety of duties and responsibilities. This trip of 1864 was made when he was forty-four years of age. Certainly there was nothing in his life from childhood to this fulness of his manhood that could in any way be regarded as a rut. Experience and schooling made him pre-eminently a well-qualified man for those days. Thus far in life there had been no failure on his part to limit the confidence of the

leaders of the Church in the trust that might be reposed in the man.

In those days the Church was growing rapidly. New counties were in process of formation and men of genius and leadership were needed as much in these new and growing counties as they were needed upon the plains. John R. Murdock had demonstrated his ability to preside over people on camp-grounds and in emigrant trains. Could he preside over them in their newly-chosen homes where they were to enjoy greater comforts and a larger measure of individual initiation? He could lead in those peculiar experiences which had fallen to his lot from childhood. Success, however, in leadership under trying circumstances is one of the best evidences of leadership in the wider opportunities and broader fields of life. Up to this age of life he had lived in the enjoyment of a pre-eminent confidence which the leaders of the Church had always shown him. Nothing had occurred to limit that confidence, and what they thought of him then is shown by the honors that fell to him later in life.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE IN BEAVER

In the fall of 1864 the settlement of various counties throughout the territory had become so rapid, and the growth of the various towns so great, that satisfactory presiding officers were in great demand. Beaver City and the outlying districts, in that year, needed a man whose influence would promote harmony and whose leadership would be sufficiently strong to bring the contending elements together. There were circumstances in the settlement, growth, and environments of the country there which required not only an upright, capable man, but a man of discerning judgment and tactful methods. "It gave me a severe shock," said John R. Murdock, "when upon invitation I entered the office of President Young and learned that he wanted me to be the Bishop of Beaver."

In Lehi, in those early days, a strong class of men had gathered—men who subsequently figured prominently in the history of the

Church—men like Abram Hatch, Canute Peterson, John R. Murdock, and others. Naturally, there sprang up among them feelings of friendship and mutual good will. It was the boast of the people in Lehi in later years that the little community had been honored by the call of so many presiding men from its midst. One might very safely have predicted that John R. Murdock would receive some such responsibility.

“I was received very kindly and apparently very favorably by the people, who expressed a willingness that I should come and preside over them.” After looking over the situation, he returned to Lehi, where he gathered his cattle and took them to his new home to winter. However, he remained at Lehi through most of the winter of 1864 and 65, and in May returned to his new home, and by the fall of that year had all his family with him preparatory to another beginning which he was to make in life. “I bought a farm and some town lots and built houses for my family to live in. I also immediately set about building school-houses, a meeting house, and other public buildings. I was very zealous in this labor and

carried a great part of the responsibility of it myself."

His appointment, however, as Bishop brought with it a general responsibility of looking after the welfare of all the settlements in the county. And when, therefore, after about ten years all the settlements of the county were organized into a stake, John R. Murdock was chosen its President. From the outset he found the people considerably divided into factions, but he insisted that he was the Bishop of all of them and kept himself aloof from factional interests and individual favoritism. His position was a delicate one, as Beaver was then, as it has since been, made up of a great diversity of elements.

In those early days the southern settlements were considerably removed from the center of commerce. One of the first problems which confronted Bishop Murdock was to learn and make available the best resources of the people in that community. Beaver, like most other parts of the Territory, offered opportunities for cattle and sheep, but its water supply was limited, and the farming interests of the people could not be made very extensive. However, he set himself to work at figuring out

every available resource. It was not long before he organized a co-operative woolen factory with a capital stock of forty-five thousand dollars, and subsequently a mercantile co-operative institution with a capital stock of twenty thousand dollars. During these times, the cattle interests of John R. Murdock greatly increased, and his horses, sheep, and cattle, to whose care he gave scrupulous attention, brought means at his command.

In those early days he was fortunate in gathering around him men of good judgment and loyal friendship. One of these men whose support was always valuable and whose friendship he appreciated was M. L. Shepherd, a man of vast energies and financial abilities. Murdock and Shepherd, who had much in common in native ability and experience, saw eye to eye. They were quick to avail themselves of the resources about them. They accumulated wealth and became the leading spirits in the establishment of those co-operative institutions which supplied labor and developed commerce of the community. Speaking of the factory the former said: "This institution has always been a credit to the people

and has proven a great benefit to them both by supplying good articles of goods, and work for the people."

"In those early days, we had a good deal of trouble with the Indians, as they were constantly driving off our stock." Speaking of himself and others, he says: "We established an outpost on the Sevier river called Fort Stanford. This we furnished with supplies and men and were obliged to keep it up for our protection. We organized companies of militia and I was chosen lieutenant-colonel.

"Among other incidents of those times that took place with the Indians, there is one I must relate. The people of Beaver had come together for the purpose of putting a roof on the meeting-house and nearly all of the men in the county were assisting in the work when word came to us that the Indians had attacked John P. Lee's home, located on South Creek, about eight miles from Beaver. The word was brought to us by two little children, one, Charley Lee, about twelve years old, the other, a little girl by the name of Baker, a child perhaps ten years of age. Mrs. Lee had put them out of the back of the house opposite the side

attacked by the Indians. The children went through the brush and consequently were not seen by the Indians. The little ones ran all the way to Beaver. There was the greatest possible haste made and men rushed to the scene as soon as they heard the news. They secured their horses and equipments and were off within twenty minutes. I took with me in my buggy a surgeon, as a man by the name of Jos. L. White, who lived at that time on South Creek, had been wounded in the shoulder by a shot from one of the Indians' guns. The Indians had surrounded the house, which had a lumber roof, which they set on fire. While Lee stood at the door with his large blunderbuss, keeping the Indians out and resisting the Indians who were trying to break in, Mrs. Lee succeeded in putting out the fire with her pans of milk. The situation had been very critical before we reached the scene. Mr. and Mrs. Lee both displayed remarkable courage and presence of mind, but before we reached the spot the Indians became frightened and withdrew. Two of them, however, were killed by shots from Lee's gun and pistol. We took the wounded man and the Lee family, with all

their household effects, back with us to Beaver.”

The trouble of longest duration with the Indians was their practice of stock stealing. Cattle and horses were often about the only resource that many people had, and their loss from the depredation of the Indians was often a source of distress. Several expeditions were organized against these troublesome outlaws; and large expeditions, time, and money were required to stamp out a practice that was so destructive to their interests.

In the course of time, in the district of country lying west of Beaver City, mining interests were developed and markets were opened for the products of both the farm and the ranch. The growth of the town and the demands of the mines gave rise to new resources—resources that John R. Murdock was one of the first to discover and appropriate.

“E. W. Thompson and I,” he says, “sent teams to the eastern frontier, where we purchased the first saw-mill ever brought to Beaver or to the southern part of Utah. We put it up on South Creek, where it worked very successfully for a number of years. The coun-

try, however, had no extensive forests, and the lumber trade could not, therefore, continue very long. The saw-mill answered the purposes of those times and supplied the lumber necessary for improving the town and multiplying new homes. It was an additional factor in the employment of both capital and labor."

A matter of some importance to the people in the early days of Beaver was its town government. John R. Murdock was called to preside over the religious destinies of the place. Beaver City had no charter. Upon his election to the territorial legislature in 1867, he succeeded in getting a bill through, giving to his home town a charter, in consequence of which a municipal government was organized. There was some friction at first, owing to the fact that the people were divided, but he finally succeeded in harmonizing most of them.

Speaking of his legislative experience he says: "I was elected to the legislature for four consecutive terms. I was also a member of the Territorial Convention over which General Barnum presided. The object of that convention was to draft a state constitution."

Only four years had elapsed since his trip

across the plains in 1864. They were years of a busy life in which he was the leading factor in the establishment of industrial life in Beaver City. They were years devoted to the care and comforts of his family, a period in which he was given opportunity to discover and develop resources necessary for the well-being and happiness of the people over whom he presided.

At the close of four years after his call to Beaver, and in the spring of 1868, he was called to conduct a train of seventy-five wagons to Laramie City for the purpose of bringing to Utah the emigrants who were arriving there. By this time the railroad had made its way across the plains and was ascending the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. The days of emigrant trains were soon to be a thing of the past. But the later chapters, as well as the earlier ones in John R. Murdock's pioneer experiences in Utah, were filled with accounts of emigration companies and episodes of a trying character on the plains.

Speaking of this, his last experience of that kind, he said: "I had seventy-five wagons in my train. Fifty of them belonged to the

Church, and twenty-five were private conveyances. That year, as I remember, six other companies were called for a similar purpose. They were ahead of mine on the way down, but they consisted of only twenty-five wagons each. It was the custom among those companies to load in the order of their arrival. Of the two trains ahead of me, Joseph Rawlins was in command of one and Chester Loveland of the other. After loading their trains they set out for home. Just as they were leaving, a shipload of passengers arrived by train at Laramie. I, therefore, loaded my train at once and followed the advanced companies. The authorities had advised us to break a new road for about one hundred miles over the old emigrant road on the lower waters. The object of this was to avoid the railroad men who were then engaged in large numbers in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. The two companies in advance followed the new road, but my company was so large, and some of my teams were so heavily loaded that I decided, after due deliberation, to follow the old road. This seemed under all the circumstances about the only thing that I could do, and I

kept along the old Bitter Creek route. The water of that creek was correctly named, for it was bitter indeed. Fortunately, I had two loads of empty barrels, which I was taking as a part of my freight. Before starting out, I took the precaution to fill these with good water for the use of the emigrants.

"Before Rawlins left with his company I visited his camp to bid him good-bye and speak encouraging words to the emigrants. He remarked that as I had a large train and my passengers had not yet arrived he would reach Salt Lake and forget all about his trip before I got there. 'Yes, I suppose so,' I replied."

That was just the kind of a remark to put the spur deep in the flesh of John R. Murdock; competition always gave a healthy impulse to his efforts. He naturally loved to excel, wanted to do greater things than others, and was always excessively proud of a good record. All things being equal, his determination not to be outdone never forsook him. If there was anything in this world he knew, perhaps as well as any man, it was how to get the best in a team out of it. He knew how to keep things going. He could keep in mind at

the same time a large number of things to be done immediately, and he rarely ever lost his presence of mind. He foresaw danger and provided against it, and made allowances for every possible contingency which a fertile mind could create.

Note what he says of this return trip to Utah: "We did not have to wait for our load, and we made very good time down the Bitter Creek road and across Green River, where we intercepted the old pioneer road. On our arrival there, we learned that Rawlins and Loveland had not yet passed. They had been detained by the heaviness of their loads and by the Indians, who had driven away some of their stock. The stock, however, they succeeded in recovering, but not without delay. We pushed on with our train and reached Salt Lake City without any serious accident except that one boy broke his leg. The emigrants were unloaded in Salt Lake and I returned home to Beaver with my private loads of freight."

Besides the experiences of a pioneer and those of a legislator, a new duty came to President Murdock in the appointment from the

Territorial Legislature which made him the probate judge of Beaver county. This position he held for four years. During that time, he entered the town sites of Greenville, Adamsville, and Minersville. This authority was conferred by the territorial law on the probate judge.

In the winter of 1874, he again took up his work in the legislature. This work made him more or less familiar with conditions existing in every part of the territory. The work also brought him in contact with the leading men of those times, and enabled him to bring back to his people in Beaver the experiences, suggestions, and observations of others similarly laden with responsibilities. While he was generous in giving out to others the results of his own experiences, he was equally anxious to gain information from every available source. He made inquiries about the best breeds of stock, about the best implements for the farm, about the best methods of developing the resources which he thought were within the reach of his people. He not only possessed the rare faculty of accumulating means from the resources about him, but he was zealous in

urging the people to avail themselves of the very same opportunities that came to him. He rejoiced in the prosperity and progress of others, and he therefore did much to promote the spirit of industry and prudence among those over whom he presided.

However successful the life of John R. Murdock may appear in its material aspects, however well he performed every duty assigned to him, and however enviable his reputation to others may seem, he nevertheless had his own afflictions. He learned to his sorrow that there are troubles enough in this world to go round, and that as a rule, each man has his share. One after another of his children died, and with their precious little bodies he buried ambitions and fond hopes which he had cherished concerning them. As one reads the story of his life, of the hardships he endured, of his exhausting journeys and bodily privations, one can scarcely withhold the thought that may be, after all, the remarkable physical energies which were lavishly given for the safety and welfare of others, were indirectly the physical disinheritance of his own offspring; and yet he has lived on to a remark-

able old age and in the enjoyment of a sturdy and splendid manhood.

In 1878 he was called to mourn the loss of his first wife, the honorable mother of a large family, though at the time of her death only forty-nine years old.

Throughout all his maturer years he had responded to a variety of calls which he had always sacredly regarded as missions. In 1880 a new mission came to him. It was a call, upon the recommendation of John Morgan, to preach the gospel in the Southern States. In the experiences of his mission in Tennessee he mentions the acquaintances he made and refers to the work of B. H. Roberts and James T. Hammond in that mission. It has been said in this biography that President Murdock took pleasure in the thought of the things he did, but he took no less pleasure in the friends he made. It was always a source of gratification to him to claim the friendship of men and women whose character and integrity he esteemed. His friendships were, after all, more valuable acquisitions than the accumulation of wealth. In speaking not long since about the remarkable experiences and the life of Presi-

dent Murdock the writer was told by the party with whom he was conversing that he was personally not very well acquainted with John R. Murdock. What he knew of him he knew chiefly through his old and intimate friend, Erastus Snow. "Erastus Snow," said he, "esteemed President Murdock as one of his best and staunchest friends." Strong friendships that last throughout a man's life—friendships with men likewise tried and true are perhaps the best factors in determining the inmost qualities in the life of a man.

"From Tennessee I went to Nauvoo, Ill., to visit my sister Julia. She had been very unfortunate in her second marriage. I found her at the home of a Mr. Moffet, whose wife took care of her with a sisterly tenderness. Julia's foster mother, Emma, had died, and she was left without a home and under the most distressing circumstances. She was suffering from a cancer in her right breast. This was caused by a severe blow that she had received. I remained with her about one month, but on leaving I left sufficient means to provide for her and to cover the expenses of her burial and of a tombstone. She died soon after my

departure and was buried in the Catholic cemetery, having been converted to that faith through her husband's influence. On leaving Nauvoo I returned to Tennessee and continued to travel among the people there until the year 1881, when I was released and returned home, where I resumed my ecclesiastical duties."

Soon after his return from the Southern States, the Edmunds Bill of 1882 was passed. The law, however, was not enforced with respect to the offenses against polygamy until the latter part of the year 1884, when the so-called raid began. For four years the most energetic and drastic measures were taken to imprison every man within the territory who acknowledged or sustained more than one wife. The courts allowed the widest scope to be given to the interpretation of the law which was aimed exclusively at the Mormon people. Through a peculiar combination of circumstances John R. Murdock escaped prosecution, but the sympathy which he manifested for his brethren who were arrested during those trying times was both magnanimous and sincere. The court for his district held its sessions at Beaver City. Some of the outlying districts

were more than one hundred miles from this judicial center. A regular corps of deputy marshals scoured the country in quest of polygamists and of fees. Men and their wives were brought to Beaver, where many of them were strangers. These had no opportunities to provide themselves with assistance and they must either give bonds or go to jail. The requirement of the court in the matter of bonds was strict. Only those of well-known ability to meet financial obligations were accepted. John R. Murdock's financial standing in Beaver was first-class and he was ever ready to render every possible assistance to his unfortunate brethren, and went on the bonds of not fewer than fifty different men. Nor was this legal and financial assistance the only expression of his kind-hearted sympathy toward those in distress. The hospitality of his home was a source of comfort and consolation to many. The fact that his assistance was so generally sought by men who needed bonds is a splendid testimonial of the confidence that his friends in southern Utah had in him. They had known him for many years and his integrity and generous impulses were an assurance

that he would come to their relief in the hour of distress. Many a man well remembers that in him the old adage was fulfilled, "A friend in need is a friend indeed."

John R. Murdock for many years of his life filled one of the most trying positions of any Stake President in the Church. He not only had the opposing elements, and some of them were bitter from a religious point of view, but he also had more or less of the contentious element within the Church to reckon with. That, however, which was not least among the difficult problems which he had to solve was his relationship and that of his people to the soldiers who, two miles and a half east of Beaver, occupied Fort Cameron. A military post under ordinary circumstances so near a community is always a source of more or less friction. In his case the difficulties were doubly great. The preservation of the morals of the people, especially those of the young people, required his careful, constant watch care. The officers at the Fort manifested in numerous ways their respect for the religious leader of the community near which the soldiers were stationed. In view of the religious differences and at

times the great unpopularity of the Mormon people, it was often extremely difficult to avoid contentions. All things considered it may fairly be said that President Murdock conducted himself wisely under the peculiar circumstances and under the delicate relations which existed between citizens and soldiers.

When, later, General "Phil" Sheridan came to Utah and visited Fort Cameron, he was received by the officers and troops at Milford, the railroad terminus. John R. Murdock from the days of his Mormon Battalion experiences felt a special pride in military discipline. He had been a soldier in his country's service, had undergone severe trials, and had always conducted himself in such a manner as to make him proud of his military record. Quite a number of his family before him had enjoyed distinguished military honors and it is not too much to say that he inherited military tendencies.

As he had been a soldier in the service of his country and was perhaps the most conspicuous citizen in the community at Beaver, he felt it a pleasure as well as a duty to welcome at Milford the distinguished military

hero of the Shenandoah Valley. The General accepted the invitation to ride in President Murdock's carriage and the two now made their way to Fort Cameron.

When the war department at Washington finally determined to abandon Fort Cameron, its buildings were offered for sale at public auction. John R. Murdock felt that it was very desirable that these buildings and the land, as soon as it could be secured from the general government, be devoted to some public use. He therefore enlisted with him the support of the Church and the aid of his son-in-law, Philo T. Farnsworth, in the purchase of the buildings.

The government had expended something like two hundred thousand dollars in the construction of the Fort, which occupied a beautiful spot at the mouth of Beaver Canyon. The buildings were large and so erected as to leave a broad public square in the center for parades and military drills. All these buildings were bid in by the above-named parties at the modest sum of forty-eight hundred dollars. Later, President Murdock succeeded in securing the title to the land upon which the

buildings stood, as they would be of no value without it.

A guard was assigned to the Fort as a protection against the vandalism that might have soon made the place comparatively worthless. As soon as patents for the land were secured steps were taken to make some disposition of it for the benefit of the public. It was finally determined by these two liberal and patriotic citizens to contribute their share of Fort Cameron to the Brigham Young Academy of Provo in order that a branch school of that institution might be established there. The gift was gratefully accepted, and the organization of the Beaver Branch as it was familiarly known was effected.

The school opened under favorable circumstances ; from the outset there were something like two hundred in attendance and the school yearly increased in both numbers and efficiency. Nor was this the end of John R. Murdock's efforts. He, with a few other leading men, pledged himself to render financial support to the school of something like twelve hundred dollars annually for a given number of years. He was a loyal supporter of the in-

stitution, and manifested a special pride in its progress, and was liberal in the expenditure of means for its growth.

Much of his time in subsequent years was given to the improvement of the buildings which he frequently visited and whose improvement he often planned. He was always on hand when educational men visited the school and showed them every courtesy and attention. He was an appreciative man and was a strong admirer of good quality and intellectual refinement in manhood and womanhood. From the day of its dedication by Apostles Lyman and Teasdale he worked unceasingly to promote its usefulness, not only to the communities in Beaver County, but to the communities throughout southern Utah.

He continued to preside over the Beaver Stake until 1892, when, to the surprise of the people and to the Church leaders, he offered his resignation. He was sixty-six years of age and had borne the burden of public responsibilities in a most liberal manner from the time that he entered the Mormon Battalion. All the best years of his life had been devoted to his Church and his state with scrupulous re-

gard for claims that both laid upon him.

It was not an easy matter to find a suitable man to succeed him, as his leadership over the people was pronounced, both from the standpoint of their financial and religious interests. The First Presidency, therefore, accepted his resignation with great reluctance. He was, however, in his retirement universally esteemed as a leader, and the people manifested their high regard for him whenever there was an opportunity to do him political honor.

CHAPTER IX

THE EVENING OF LIFE

After laying aside the public cares and responsibilities of a life that made large and constant demands upon his physical, spiritual, and intellectual power, he felt some freedom in moving about at his own pleasure, and of rendering service wherever and whenever an opportunity offered. John R. Murdock, while a careful man in the administration of his private affairs, was nevertheless open-hearted and generous in every public undertaking. He was kind to the poor, quick to respond in the hour of distress, and generous to all classes. A federal officer who served some years in the district of Beaver once said of him: "Whenever there was a paper passed around soliciting private contributions, it was first taken to John R. Murdock, who was always expected to head the list. Opposite the amount contributed was usually found the word paid. The officers of the court, in various charities, felt compelled, through a sense of pride, to contribute half the amount given by a Mormon Bishop. He often

placed his contribution at a figure which his non-Mormon friends did not always like to meet by the donation of one-half that given by him. He was certainly a generous-spirited and charitable man."

His interests and contributions covered a wide field. Not least among his contributions was his support of the Temples. In these buildings he felt a special pride. "To the Saint George Temple," he said, "I subscribed between four and five thousand dollars; to the Manti Temple I gave over six thousand; and to the Salt Lake Temple, near the time of its completion, fifteen hundred and twenty-five dollars, in addition to former donations." He was one of the body of men who met in Salt Lake City in 1892, at a special meeting of the leaders of the Church, which included stake presidents, to take into consideration the best ways and means for the completion of the Salt Lake Temple. A special effort was put forth to bring about the completion of that edifice in order that it might be dedicated in the spring of 1893. To finish it, something like twenty thousand dollars were required. At a priesthood meeting the matter was laid before

these leading men. John R. Murdock promptly arose and suggested that those present on that occasion first determine what they themselves could do before appealing to the people. President Cannon approved the suggestion and asked him to start the contribution. This he did by setting the pace at one thousand dollars. Thereupon a person was appointed to go through the audience and receive the contributions of others. President Murdock was then asked if he would not bear the expense of one of the three beautiful art windows in the interior of the Temple. He promptly responded in the affirmative, and gave as above mentioned on that occasion fifteen hundred and twenty-five dollars. When there is taken into consideration his years of gratuitous service to the interests of the Church in bringing emigrants to the valleys of the mountains, in providing ways and means for the support of public institutions, the public-spirited manner in which he met any call legitimately laid upon him, it will be conceded that few men in Utah have done more to entitle them to the respect of the people than he has done throughout a lifelong service.

From the time that John R. Murdock, a mere child, had been consigned to the tender mercies of strangers, to his later years in Utah, he had known but little of his people who remained at their homes in Ohio. He was a child, and therefore not of much consequence to them, especially in view of the fact that his lot had been cast with an unpopular people. His family on his mother's side had rendered a considerable military service. His Uncle Henry Clapp, his mother's brother, had a son, Major William H. Clapp, who was then stationed in the Sixteenth United States Regiment at Fort Douglas. About the time of his retirement from ecclesiastical services, his Uncle Henry came to Utah for the purpose of visiting his son, the major. The cousin bore the distinguished honor of having fought in the Union Army during the rebellion.

While in Utah his uncle paid him a visit in Beaver. They had not seen each other for more than sixty-five years. The prominence of the nephew in the affairs of Utah Territory made him a worthy object of honor to his Uncle Henry Clapp. It was on this visit that the nephew learned of the Clapp genealogy,

which had been followed back to the tenth century, and in this genealogical record the family name of Clapp was traced back to King Canute's court in England. The publications contained the names of ten thousand six hundred people. To John R. Murdock the discovery of this record was a matter of first importance. After his resignation from the presidency of Beaver Stake, he was ordained a patriarch. This gave him not only the opportunity to perform the functions of his new calling, but to labor in the Temples, which he had helped to erect for the salvation of his kindred dead.

In the evening of life he could surrender himself to the spiritual enjoyment that comes from associations in the House of God. To him it was miraculously marvelous that in the hour of a genealogical need the publication of such a family record was brought to his knowledge.

He was one of those who in 1893 enjoyed the privilege of taking part in the dedication of the great Salt Lake Temple, which for so many years had been in the process of construction. It was a grand occasion in his life,

an occasion in which his family could participate with him. His oldest daughter, Mrs. P. T. Farnsworth, had moved from Milford to Salt Lake City, where the hospitality of her home was enjoyed by her father.

In the year 1892 John R. Murdock was appointed a member of the Utah Agricultural Commission to the World's Fair. In the following year, in September, with his wife Mary Ellen, he paid a visit to that great exposition.

After the death of his first wife, his wife Mary Ellen, who had always been prominent in the counsels of his family, became a strong supporter of those liberal policies which characterized the later years of his life. Her devotion to the Church and her pride in its material welfare made her enthusiastic over the completion of the Temples. In educational matters she seconded the efforts of her husband, who did so much to establish and maintain the academy which subsequently bore his name. Mrs. Mary Ellen Murdock will always be gratefully remembered by those who enjoyed the hospitality of her home during those trying hours when men and women were sorely afflicted by the persecutions which so many of

the people had to bear from 1884 to 1890. In later years it was her good fortune to enjoy the opportunities of visiting with her husband many of the early land marks of Church History, and at a time when her husband felt the need of her companionship and care.

She had accepted the principle of plural marriage, which she consistently supported and faithfully carried out. In the early efforts of members of the Church to practice a belief against the traditions of centuries and the selfishness of human nature, her faith predominated; and in the evening of life, after all the disturbances, discords, and trials of her earlier year had been overcome, she saw no reason to recant or doubt the principle she had done so much to perpetuate and honor. On her journey, therefore, to the East, her testimony was mingled with her husband's wherever opportunity afforded.

The World's Fair was the greatest industrial exhibition that the world had ever witnessed. John R. Murdock passed through its buildings and witnessed there the achievements in science, art, and inventions. He was impressed by the wonderful changes that

had taken place since his boyhood days when he himself was a humble and despised citizen of Illinois. The contrast to his mind was striking. The marvelous and the wonderful changes were so great as to be miraculous to him.

He himself, however, was not without his honorable place in the march of modern civilization; he was a pioneer to the new and undeveloped West. Within his own life there was a wonderful story of change and progress. What he himself had witnessed within his lifetime was a most remarkable transformation in the life, opportunities, and achievements of men. Few men were in a better position to appreciate that great exposition than he was. He mentions, too, with pride the satisfaction he felt in the distinguished place occupied at the World's Fair by the great Tabernacle choir.

As the vision of this remarkable progress crowded upon his mind, he became reminiscent; he remembered the beginnings of his own life and longed to visit the places where he had passed his childhood. After his stay at the Fair he visited his birth-place in Orange township, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. In the well-kept cemetery there, his mother had been laid

away in his early childhood. He was told that she was the first person to occupy a grave in that city of the dead.

Orange township is about fifteen miles east of Cleveland. While in that neighborhood he also visited the town of Mentor, which is about six miles west of Painesville. Mentor was the home of his mother's family. While there he listened to an address by Governor McKinley, a governor who subsequently became president. It evidently made a most favorable impression upon him. He refers to President McKinley as an impressive and inspiring speaker. During the upheaval in Utah over the silver question, John R. Murdock stood firmly in 1896 for President McKinley and his policy.

From Ohio he returned to Chicago, where he visited the principal places of interest. Its great mercantile houses interested him and the stock yards excited his wonder. His travels abroad were in striking contrast with his travels during his frontier life. He had both the means and the inclination to enjoy such a tour. He returned to his home in October of that year.

The last years of John R. Murdock's life were characterized by strong political coloring. When the people of Utah divided upon national party lines he cast his lot with the Republicans. In the fall of 1894 he was appointed a delegate from Utah to the national Republican league which met that year in Denver, Colorado.

About that time his life was tinged with sadness through the death of his oldest son, familiarly known as "Johnny." He had died at McCammon, Idaho, while on his way from that place to his father's home in Beaver.

The division of party lines created considerable excitement throughout the territory. It was a newly found occupation to many of Utah's prominent men. The political excitement of those times pointed to the early admission of Utah as a state. Fraternal good feeling was quite universally manifested. Congress passed an enabling act, calling for a constitutional convention, which met in Salt Lake City on the 4th of March, 1895. To this convention he was elected a delegate and was made chairman of the water and irrigation committee. He was also a strong advocate of

woman's suffrage. He took a general interest in all those constitutional provisions which safe-guarded the rights of the people of Utah.

In November of that year, when the first officers were elected, the state went Republican. Men of all classes, without respect to religious differences were elected to office. The advent, therefore, of Utah to statehood was an important milestone in the history of his life in Utah.

On the 7th of April, in Salt Lake City, the first Republican convention was held. John R. Murdock was a delegate and became its first chaplain. John E. Dooly was chairman, and Julia Farnsworth, subsequently Julia Lund, a granddaughter of President Murdock, was secretary.

The year 1897 was a jubilee in the history of the Utah pioneers. It was fifty years since the Mormon leaders had first entered the valley of Great Salt Lake. It was, therefore, fitting that a celebration in honor of those veterans be held. It was a joyous occasion. All classes took part in the celebration. To wear the pioneer's badge on the 24th of July, 1897, was a rare distinction bestowed upon those

entitled to the honor. Among them was John R. Murdock, a member of the Mormon Battalion, whose hardships exceeded even those of the pioneers. The legislature had appropriated to each county one hundred and twenty-five dollars with which to prepare some appropriate display in the parade on the 24th. President Murdock was made an agent for the expenditure of this fund for Beaver county, and prepared a sulphur grotto float, which was indeed a unique display. His daughter Almira was chosen as Beaver county's queen on that occasion.

In the parade he was assigned to the command of the survivors of the Mormon Battalion, about thirty-five in number, a distinction which he truly merited, not only as a part of the organization, but because of his conspicuous and prominent part in the pioneer life of Utah. To him it was a great day. Between that day and the day when he was marshaled into the service on the banks of the Missouri river there lay fifty years of remarkable vicissitudes and experiences. No wonder his heart was touched. He never dreamed of such honors during all the years in which he was win-

ning a title to them. No wonder he said, "When I saw those venerable survivors of the Mormon Battalion and the Utah pioneers the tears would come to my eyes. The scene was indeed sublime and pathetic."

As time went on, the political affairs of Utah became more interesting. The political majorities of the Republican party were swept away by the free silver excitement. Utah cast an overwhelming vote for Mr. Bryan. However, in the fall of 1898 John R. Murdock was nominated by acclamation as a representative to the state legislature. He at first declined the honor of the nomination, but finally yielded to the persuasion of his friends, who were not mistaken about the loyalty of the people of Beaver county to him and the support he would receive from them. Though the county had always been Democratic he was nevertheless elected, November 8th, to the third state legislature. He was the senior of the house. He belonged during the session of the legislature of that year to a frail Republican minority. He witnessed the exciting scenes in the bitter contest for the election of a United States senator; and in that body of men who were exhib-

iting the greatest factional enmity, he became a peacemaker. A man of naturally generous instincts, his influence was persuasive upon others. He did much to mitigate animosities that had been almost unbearable.

During those experiences, however, he formed new friendships which became to him a source of satisfaction in subsequent years.

His political influence was no greater than his interest in those conventions which were called to promote the material welfare of the West. He was a member of the irrigation congress at Missoula, Montana, in September, 1899; and in 1900 he was a member of the convention that nominated James T. Hammond as a representative to congress. Though advanced in years, his manly form became conspicuous in political assemblies and various conventions of the people. His interests had grown far beyond the stake over which he formerly presided. He took a special interest in the proposed projects for the irrigation of the great West. His extensive travels over the western deserts gave to him a sympathetic interest in whatever gave promise of their reclamation.

In speaking of his family attachments, he refers to the return to Utah of his brother Orrice, who had been with him in the Mormon Battalion. "This brother," he says, "remained in California until the year 1848, when he came to Utah. Here he married, but upon the death of his wife he married a second time and went back to Iowa, where he remained for a season. Later he went to Nebraska, where his second wife died and he returned to Utah in 1896.

CHAPTER X

CHARACTER SKETCH

A mother's love throughout a man's life is always tender and solacing. In moments of depression, in hours of disappointment, and in the trying ordeals of this world, especially in bodily infirmities, it is indeed one of the surest anchors to a man's hope and joy. In childhood it is all but indispensable to the clinging nature and loving regard of a boy. Those who have felt a mother's tenderness and love throughout their youth wonder as they look back in life how they could have been happy without it. There is always something wanting in a man's life when he is deprived of that fond sympathy and loving care. Their loss constitutes a void which nothing else can fill. John R. Murdock was thrown out upon the world at a time of life when his earliest recollections merely called to mind the fact that he once had a mother, but her tender care and loving fondness never came within any lasting memories. He was a motherless boy and was left to the care and mercy of

strangers. Such a loss, however, is not without its compensation. If he had to win his way in the world upon the merit of his industry and patience, he also learned in life that if he were to enjoy the love of others he must win it. Life, therefore, with him from the beginning was one of conquest. From childhood, his life was a struggle for material, spiritual, and social betterment, and he therefore realized how he came by every confidence, every friendship, and every heart-felt devotion that made life joyful to him. Throughout all the years of his manhood he esteemed the friendships of life as the most valuable assets that he acquired in his associations with others. If there is any one thing in the life of John R. Murdock more characteristic than another, it is the deep-seated love and confidence which he always manifested for his friends. That a worthy man, tried and true, was his friend was more to him than a passing circumstance. Speaking of those he knew, especially in trying ordeals of earlier days, he is wont to say, "He is my friend."

Nor was his sense of appreciation for the friendship of others any greater than the de-

votion which he always manifested toward those who won and enjoyed his confidence and love. His feelings were intense. With him there was nothing too good in this world for those he esteemed as his friends. His friendship was always sincere and heartfelt. Who, that has seen him meet an old-time companion with whom he had been closely associated in life, that has not noticed the light of an inward and supreme satisfaction beam in his eyes, and joy radiate from his whole being. The recollections, therefore, of those personal associations and friendly ties cheered him on his way wherever his lot was cast among men.

Another and peculiar characteristic of the man was his native industry and untiring zeal. What he put his hands to do he did with all his heart. There was about him an inspiring enthusiasm which was always refreshing and encouraging. In early life he had to do things whether they were difficult or not, whether they were agreeable or disagreeable, tasteful or distasteful. He learned, therefore, to apply his will power to every task that beset him, nor had his tasks been easy ones. If there were difficult places to be filled, if a man was wanted

whose courage rarely or never failed him, John R. Murdock was sought after whenever he was available. From the habit of conquering unusual and difficult tasks in early life, things that looked hard to others were easy to him; and when he knew, therefore, a thing could be done he was not easily turned from the undertaking. What made him helpful to so many of his fellow-men was the fact that having learned what he himself could do, he also learned what others could do for themselves if they would only venture. From the habit of doing things he became deviceful, ingenious, and had at his command all sorts of contrivances for getting on in the world.

Throughout southern Utah the name of John R. Murdock is a household word to thousands; his prominent position in the Church and his services in political life made him conspicuous to the public eye. All those days of his public life he deported himself in a modest and becoming manner. While he was unassuming, he always possessed sufficient dignity to command the respect of those with whom he was associated. He was a leader in the highest and best sense of the term. In teach-

ing others the work and the duties of a pioneer, he could point to a model record of his own pioneer days. When teaching others whatever was necessary to do, he first did it himself, and did it well. He was more a man of action than a man of words. The experiences of his early life taught him prudence, and the difficulties and triumphs of his early manhood gave him wisdom. Perhaps no higher compliment could be paid to his consistent, well-balanced life than to say that he was always a safe man. Throughout all his history he is found on the safe side of every question. He was not carried away by excitement; for he was cool and deliberative. He was not easily deceived, for he always possessed a conscientious regard for the truth. By nature he was free, frank, and open.

To the everlasting honor and credit of John R. Murdock, it may be truly said of him, that he was a model ex-Stake President. When he lay down voluntarily, and from his own high sense of duty, the conspicuous office which he held for so many years of his life, he must have realized that he surrendered an honor which he, like other conscientious men, must

have highly esteemed. From the day he stepped out of that office he never manifested the least sentiment of dissatisfaction, discontent, or envy. His soul never soured, no jealousy actuated him; he was just as devoted, loyal, and true in the humble walks of life as he had been while clothed with the dignities of a high and important office. He never descended to things that were unbecoming and undignified in one who had enjoyed distinguished honors. He was just as loyal to his new president as any other man had ever been to him. He never belittled his former office or calling. There are always misgivings about those who surrender authority and the dignities of a high office. Few men who stand high in command in life maintain their zeal when in the ranks. It is hard for most men in such circumstances to forget what they have been and become so wedded to principle that its triumph is of more consequence to them than their own personal ambition, or the honors of the world; and when President Murdock determined to ask that the duties and honors of his office be conferred upon others, he did so in the sincerest conviction that it was in the interest, first of all to

the Church, and secondly to his own personal well-being. The step he never regretted, and the influence of his life was as conspicuous in his retirement as it had been in his ministrations. What has been said may here be repeated, "John R. Murdock was a model ex-Stake President."

That which made the life of John R. Murdock both interesting and inspiring throughout a long and consistent career was the enthusiasm which he brought to every task, and an accompanying ambition that never forsook him from the period covered between fire of youth and the calm of old age. Enthusiasm and ambition frequently manifest themselves in youth. Their chief value, however, is to be found in the will power sufficiently strong to make the dreams of youth a reality in after life. Those who know the man will readily testify that his enthusiasm never waned, that there were behind him ambitions that were constantly urging him to a better and higher life.

But even enthusiasm and ambition and will power are of little value to a man that does not sincerely and earnestly work. John R. Murdock was never, throughout a long and

distinguished career, an idle man. In youth there was about him a physical prowess that enabled him to do extraordinary things and accomplish unusual tasks. All through life, even after the blessings of material well-being came to him, he was the same industrious man that he had been in youth and upon the plains.

In old age, when his physical powers were yielding to the decrees of Father Time, his mind was occupied in the companionship of good books. Knowledge always interested and delighted him; and when the struggles of early life gave way to the opportunities of intellectual pursuits, he manifested an uncommon pleasure in the intellectual acquirements of men and the progress of human life. With a God-given intellect which it had been his good fortune in life to enjoy, it is not easy to say what his station in the world would have been had he been born in a scholastic atmosphere, and had he been allowed to enjoy from his youth the advantages of good schools.

The writer, having known President Murdock for many years, confesses some surprise at the achievements of the man, not having known his earlier record. A closer study into

his life and character reveals the fact that John R. Murdock was a man highly endowed, and a man who put to most excellent service the talents and extraordinary powers which a kind and benevolent Creator had placed at his command. This eulogy upon the life of the man is far in excess of that which the writer believed he could justly give when he began the task of this biography. Little by little and with ever-increasing conviction there has grown upon the writer an enthusiastic admiration for the subject of this sketch, and what he has written has been the result largely of a more familiar knowledge of the man which the study of his career has given.

Fearing that this eulogy might appear to be a highly colored panegyric on the life of John R. Murdock, the writer has sought the opinions of others, one of which is hereby given by a man whose knowledge of men in general, and of John R. Murdock in particular, qualifies him to speak as one having authority.

"Are you well acquainted with John R. Murdock?" asked the writer, of President Francis M. Lyman.

"Yes, indeed," was the reply. "I have known him nearly all my life."

"What, in your judgment," further queried the writer, "were the most striking characteristics of the man?"

"The most remarkable thing about John R. Murdock," he continued, "was his unyielding, his undying faith in the prophetic mission of Joseph Smith. He is naturally a great student, and in late years has been an indefatigable reader. You will find him well versed in ancient history and familiar with the history of his own country, especially that of the early patriots. When he went on his mission some years ago to the Southern States, he learned perhaps, what he never knew before, the real value of the Book of Mormon. He became a close student of the book and an enthusiastic advocate of its teachings."

"President Murdock always possessed most excellent business qualifications, and so far as I know, all his accumulations of wealth were brought about in the most honorable manner. He has always attended carefully to the details of his business, and has been a hard worker as well as an industrious student. He has always been a good judge of men, and when on the plains he had a happy faculty of getting along well with the emigrants and looking af-

ter their comfort and safety. He was also an excellent judge of animals, and I have heard it said of him that in those days of the ox-team emigration he knew every ox and where every ox belonged with respect to the wagon to which it was hitched and with respect to the team in which it worked. From what I can learn, John R. Murdock was perhaps the greatest of all the captains that conducted emigrant companies across the plains.

“As a stake president he always gave satisfaction and it was some time before the presidency would consent to his release. He has sustained himself well throughout life, and is not only a man of affairs but is really quite a philosopher. After he was released from his duties as president of the Beaver Stake, he never sulked, never got into a corner, but stood right at his president’s side and was helpful to him in every possible manner. We have always taken him into our private counsels whenever we visited Beaver and had business of any importance to transact. I consider his conduct as an ex-president most commendable. Of course, there are those who have criticized him. No man who has been as prominent

among his fellow men as he has been can hope to escape criticism."

The author of the foregoing statement may be a little surprised to find it in print, but it was given in such a free, frank, and sincere manner that the writer has taken the liberty to quote the remarks as accurately as possible and immediately after they were uttered.

A study of the life and character of John R. Murdock has revealed the fact that many a man lives comparatively unknown to the world and unappreciated simply because his life of extraordinary usefulness and great accomplishments has not been recorded on the pages of history.

At the time of this writing, Jan. 1, 1909, he lives in Beaver City at the venerable age of eighty-two years. The vision of his mind carries him back over almost the entire history of the Church. With its leading men and its great events he has been closely associated. He, too, has learned the value of a well-spent and useful life.

JOSEPH M. TANNER.

Family of John Riggs Murdock.

FIRST FAMILY.

John Riggs Murdock, born September 13, 1826.

Wife, Almira H. Lott, born December 15, 1829; married November 13, 1849; died December 16, 1878.

His children by her are as follows:

John C. Murdock, born December 17, 1850.

Julia P. Murdock, born December 23, 1852.

Orrin P. Murdock, born April 22, 1855; died September 8, 1863.

William S. Murdock, born September 15, 1857; died October 15, 1857.

Joseph R. Murdock, born May 19, 1860.

George C. Murdock, born July 6, 1862.

Orrice C. Murdock, born August 31, 1866.

Benjamin Murdock, stillborn 1869.

SECOND FAMILY.

Wife, Mary Ellen Wolfenden, born November 12, 1842; married January 10, 1863.

His children by her are as follows:

Charles E. Murdock, born December 12, 1864.

Sarah A. Murdock, born November 12, 1866; died July 27, 1867.

Mary I. Murdock, born May 18, 1866; died August 27, 1869.

Lillie M. Murdock, born July 9, 1870, died February 25, 1884.

Phoebe J. Murdock, born March 11, 1873; died December 27, 1874.

Abraham E. Murdock, born October 6, 1875; died June 6, 1876.

Albert P. Murdock, (twin) born April 1, 1877; died May 7, 1877.

Arthur W. Murdock, (twin) born April 1, 1877; died May 10, 1877.

Almirah H. Murdock, born January 15, 1879.

John R. Murdock, Jr., born July 30, 1883.

THIRD FAMILY.

Wife, May Bain, born October 25, 1833; married December 10, 1863.

Alexander Murdock, stillborn, December, 1866.







